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COMFORT FOR ALL

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DIAMONDS FOR BREAKFAST.

BY J. D. ELLSWORTH.

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MY CHRISTMAS breakfast was smoking hot upon the table when a note came from the chief inspector asking me to report immediately at police headquarters.

My appetite was gone.

I left the table without touching a mouthful of food.

My name, James Burns, stood on the books as the oldest detective on the force and yet, that 25th day of December, 1889, I felt that the sudden summons to headquarters could mean but one thing—discharge.

Like a flash it came to me that Christmas day was the anniversary of the great Bandbury diamond robbery.

What did that mean to me?

Well, I'll have to explain. On Christmas night, the year before, a magnificent reception was held at the residence of old Judge Bandbury. An awning stretched from the front door to the curbstone, the street was blocked with carriages, and on the sidewalk was a crowd of loiterers who watched the entrance whence issued a blaze of light.

Mrs. Bandbury was not a young woman but she was a very handsome one, for it used to be said that the Judge had married her to wear the family jewels, which were almost as famous as the family name.

She wore the name and the jewels grandly that night. Those who saw her told me that she seemed to be surrounded with the illumination of fire-flashing gems.

There was a profusion of rings and bracelets and elaborately jewelled pins in the collection, which Mrs. Bandbury wore in her hair and corsage, and upon her shapely arms and aristocratic fingers. But the pride of them all was a gorgeous necklace, with a large pendant crescent, all set with perfect blue-white stones. These rare gems were what delighted the eyes of connoisseurs and gave to the collection the extraordinary value of one hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars.

In the midst of the fete, after the first formalities were over, Mrs. Bandbury rushed weeping into the drawing-room and fell fainting in her husband's arms.

You can imagine what confusion and excitement would follow a scene like that. Ladies screamed and gentlemen crowded around the astonished host. Just as the lady began to open her eyes, the cold, intense tones of the Judge were heard clearly above the general hubbub.

"Gentlemen, she has been robbed. The Bandbury jewels are gone!"

That quieted everybody. The ladies took charge of Mrs. Bandbury while the Judge questioned the footman and other servants. None of them had been near the lady at the time. Then he telephoned to the police headquarters and by the time I could get to his house, Mrs. Bandbury had recovered sufficiently to tell her story.

There was little to tell.

While passing through the hall she had suddenly felt her eyes blindfolded and her arms seized by strong hands. She was paralyzed by fear and although she felt that she was being stripped of her jewels she could only utter a feeble protest that was drowned by the music of the orchestra.

Then she was as suddenly released and wrapped closely in the heavy folds of the portiere that hung by the entrance of the drawing-room. When she managed to free herself from the curtain she had rushed into her husband's arms.

But the diamonds were gone.

It was a daring robbery and made without leaving a single trace of the perpetrator. I again questioned the guests and the house servants and then went out the back entrance and mingled with the crowd of coachmen and loungers upon the sidewalk.

A policeman had been stationed before the house but at the time the deed was done he was reporting to his station from the nearest patrol box.

There was not a clue.

I threw all my energies into the case but was not able to penetrate one step into the mystery. I had spent a great deal of time in trying to find the bold diamond thief, and when I failed in that I tried every known means of discovering the diamonds. The Judge had great influence at headquarters and tried by the promise of large rewards to recover the gems and leave the mystery a mystery still.

All, all in vain.

Fate seemed to have decreed that Beatrice Bandbury, the Judge's only daughter, who was engaged to be married, should lose the family name and the family jewels.

I knew my chief as a patient man but as I hurried through the streets that Christmas morning, I felt certain that his patience had come to an end.

Why shouldn't he complain?

A year had passed and nothing had been accomplished. I had worked faithfully, to be sure, but, I had failed. No explanation of mine would alter that fact.

I felt blue and desperate, as the anxiety of the past year had told upon my nerves, for even a detective has nerves.

The streets were full of the sights and sounds of Christmas day but I turned my head away. They seemed to mock me.

When I reached headquarters the clerk told me that the chief had left word to have me join him in his private office. That seemed to me, in my excited state, dubious, and I almost fancied that I could see the tall form of Judge Bandbury rising in accusation.



SHE SUDDENLY FELT HER EYES BLINDFOLDED.

I mustered up my courage and entered the chief's room. The Judge was not there at all,

out instead there was a middle-aged, prosperous-looking gentleman whom the chief introduced as Mr. Lowndes, a well-known real estate dealer. The chief looked at me pleasantly and did not say a word about the Bandbury diamonds.

"We have a delicate case here, Mr. Burns," said the chief, "and I feel that I can trust you to do all that can be done."

These words gave me fresh courage and I sharpened my wits for the work that was to come.

Mr. Lowndes told his own story. He was a confirmed old bachelor, and lived in a house that was once his father's and which was situated in the older part of the city. On the night before, which of course was Christmas eve, he had given a jolly little dinner to a few old college friends. To grace the occasion he had taken out the silver service, which was a heirloom in the family and of great value for its weight and rare workmanship.

This plate was ordinarily kept securely locked up in a safe built into the wall of the old-fashioned family mansion, Only Mr. Lowndes himself knew the combination to the lock and lest the secret might die with him, an explanation of it was contained in a sealed envelope which was held by his lawyers to be opened after his death.

The butler, an old and trusted servant, was the only person besides Mr. Lowndes who handled the plate. It was a merry dinner, but after it was over and his guests were gone Mr. Lowndes himself saw that the precious silverware was locked securely in its safe.

At breakfast he was reminded by something he saw in the paper of some insurance matters and went to look at the policies which were kept in a separate compartment of the safe.

When he swung open the heavy iron door he started back aghast.

The silver was gone!

Every piece of that old and valuable plate had totally disappeared.

He instantly summoned his butler who was apparently as much dumbfounded as his master. Then Mr. Lowndes had ordered his carriage to come to us and report the loss and see what could be done towards the recovery of the stolen property.

The chief and I both agreed that the great danger was that the thieves would melt down the silver. They would not dare to sell it as it was, but melted into a brick its identity would be lost and recovery would be practically impossible.



UNLOCKING THE SAFE.

We should have to work quickly or not at all, for the thieves might even then be breaking up their plunder.

I hurriedly took from my desk a strong magnifying glass, a bunch of skeleton keys and a little chunk of beeswax. These odds and ends are frequently as useful to us as to the thieves themselves; in fact, my skeleton keys had been taken from a noted cracksman, and had played an important part in many robberies, but that was not the fault of the keys.

I did not waste much time, but it was nearly 10 o'clock when I got into the carriage with Mr. Lowndes to be driven to his home. As we approached the real estate dealer pointed out his house and I was careful to notice its situation. It stood on a corner, fronting on the avenue, the side extending along a cross street. Back of the house was a small courtyard, separated from the street by a high brick wall. A gateway gave admission to the kitchen quarters and "back door" of the mansion.

The kitchen itself was on the ground floor at the rear of the house and the dining-room, over the kitchen, looked out upon this little area.

When we entered the house I found that alongside the dining-room and opening into it, was a little room barely ten feet square, and into the wall of this room the silver safe was set.



"I COULD PLAINLY SEE THE GLITTERING SAFE KNOB"

To my questions, Mr. Lowndes and the butler replied that it was about five o'clock in the evening when the safe was unlocked. Daylight was just beginning to fade, and Mr. Lowndes in passing through the dining-room, had picked up a lighted lamp and held it in one hand while he unlocked the safe.

After dinner the butler had carefully washed the silver and returned it to its place. Both were positive that the safe had been securely locked. The only fact that gave the slightest clue was that one of the dining-room windows had been found unlocked.

I had the two men go through the performance of opening the safe. Mr. Lowndes stooped down and turned the knob, holding in one hand a rolled-up newspaper to represent the lamp. The butler stood a little to one side, as nearly as he could tell where he had stood the night before. I stood at the butler's elbow and satisfied myself that by watching the large old-fashioned dial closely he could easily have read the combination as Mr. Lowndes slowly turned it around.

I looked the man over and made up my mind that unless appearances greatly lied, he knew absolutely nothing about the robbery. He was the very image of the honest, painstaking, reliable servant who stays a lifetime with one family.

Mr. Lowndes and the butler watched me curiously as I went to the suspicious dining-room window and examined it critically with my magnifying glass. From various little marks I soon came to the conclusion that it had been opened by passing a thin steel blade between the sashes and throwing aside the catch. This was a small bit of evidence, but it was enough to convince me that the work was done by outsiders.

Then I went back into the safe room. There was only one window in this, an oval-shaped one, rather high in the rear wall and overlooking the yard. This window was one piece of handsome plate glass and although pivoted so as to swing open, was fastened by a good strong bolt.

Time was flying and I had accomplished nothing. I took another look at the safe. It was old-fashioned but reliable, with a thick door and heavy hinges. There were no signs that it had been tampered with.

Suddenly I had what must have been an inspiration.

I had a theory. It was a wild one, but there was one chance in a thousand that it was right. I put my head down to the lock of the safe and looked up to the oval window in the opposite wall.

Through that window I could see a third story window in the side wall of the house across the little back courtyard. It was about 30 feet away. The blinds were tightly closed but I decided that I must find out something about that window.

Slipping out of the Lowndes residence I walked around the corner and up the cross street. I found that I could easily locate the closed window and when I came to the door I was reassured to find the conventional card of "Rooms to let."

While waiting for the door to be opened in answer to my ring I decided what to do. Either that third floor room would explain the mystery or it would not. I looked at my watch and found that it was nearly eleven o'clock. There was no time to mince matters. The landlady herself came to the door and when I said that I wished to ask some questions about her house, she invited me in.

A few minutes conversation satisfied me that she was just what she seemed, a hard-working, honest woman. Her lodgers, she said, were hard-working people like herself, and it was evident that if there were crooks in the house she did not know it.

"I am an agent from the insurance department," I said, "and would like to look through your house."

She was somewhat mystified, but she had no thought of objecting. After a cursory look downstairs I told her I would go up on the third floor and followed as she led the way. Most of the rooms were unlocked and looking from their windows I had no difficulty in locating the one with the closed blinds.

That room's door was locked.

The landlady knocked and got no answer. She had no key, she said, because she had given the duplicate to the second lodger. It did not matter as I opened the door with one from my own bunch.

The room was an ordinary bed-room with the usual furniture. It was in some disorder and the bed had not been made. In one corner I saw a pair of shoes carelessly thrown out of the way

They had rubbers on.

There had been no rain or snow for a week and the rubbers, which were brand-new, bore no marks of mud. At the foot of the bed stood a huge Saratoga trunk, also new.

Under a newspaper on the bureau, I found what I was looking for. A long and very powerful pair of binoculars, or double telescope. Without doubt these had been left set at the proper focus for the distance for which they were last used.

Stepping to the window, I tilted the blind slightly and looked down through the window of Mr, Lowndes house, across the area. I could plainly see the glistening safe knob. He had said that when he had unlocked the safe the night before he had held a bright lamp.

Even without this illumination I could, with a little study, make out the figures, 0, 10, 20, and so on, although I could not distinguish any of the smaller divisions. However, they could be guessed at pretty closely.

The dial then stood, as nearly as I could make out, about half way between 60 and 70—that is, 65. I had not the slightest doubt, that had Mr. Lowndes appeared in the room at that moment and slowly turned the knob, I could have told very nearly, if not exactly, the combination.

I felt that my theory was verified, but meanwhile the men might any minute return to their room. I thought of the trunk. It was locked, as I expected. I seized hold of one end and tried to lift it. It was very heavy. No ordinary clothing would give it that weight.

Did it contain the silver?

Of that I felt confident. The plate was too heavy to be carried far.

Now to trap the men.

I closed and locked the door and as I did so I noticed that the landlady was growing nervous and suspicious.



THE SURPRISE

"There is something crooked about that room," I said. "I believe you to be an honest woman but if you value your safety you must help me catch those men."

She was much agitated and professing her ignorance of anything wrong, promised to help me all she could.

"I am going to summon assistance," I said, "and during my absence expect you to watch for those men, but don't let them know that I have been in their room as you value your own safety.

She promised faithfully to do as I said and then directed me to a drug store near by, where there was a public telephone.

Calling up the chief inspector at headquarters, I told him that I thought I had located the silver and would like to have two officers in citizen's clothes sent out at once to watch No. 647 and assist me in any way they could.

I was not gone long but when I got back the watchful landlady met me at the door The men had returned and brought a third man with them. She also said that I could probably hear what they said from the adjoining room which had a connecting door that had been nailed up.

Together we went to this room and with her help I cautiously moved the old-fashioned bureau that stood against the door. Then I listened.

"Well, now for business," said a deep voice, cautiously. "Over at the restaurant you said you couldn't handle the stuff in its present shape?"

"No, it is not worth a cent to me," said another voice. "It is too dangerous. If you wish to sell me a brick or two of silver, I pay you a good price by weight."

"But it's worth too much to melt down," put in a third voice. "Think of the workmanship. You ought to see some of the pieces."

"All marked, my friend, with the owner's name. It would take months to sell the pieces, even in other cities. To melt it is cheapest and safest."

"Well wont you make us an offer for the stuff as it stands?"

"Where is it?" said the cautious, greedy voice.

"I'm settin' on it this blooming minute."

"Well, yes, I will look at it," said the other, hesitatingly.

That was enough for me. I ran down to the front door and beckoned to the two men who had met on the opposite sidewalk and were apparently engaged in idle gossip.

Very briefly I explained that I had two burglars treed, and that there was a fence-keeper with them who might be useful. We knew we had desperate men to deal with and decided not to stand upon ceremony. Men in their fix have shot through a door before now.

We stole quietly up to the third floor and threw our united strength against the room door, forcing it open.

It was a complete surprise. The two burglars would have made a fight, but before they could draw their weapons each was seized by an officer and fitted to a pair of cuffs.

The game was up and with the irons on their hands they sat glum and silent.

I stood in the doorway with a drawn revolver, but it was needless. Before the open trunk stood a cowering old man with his hands before his face. But I had recognized him.

He was not a common pawn-broker but the proprietor of a small, but fashionable store for the sale of bric-a-brac. His place was right under the shadow of police headquarters and was only patronized by the wealthiest and most exclusive ladies.

Mr. Ephraiham was generous to his friends and was something of a politician. I had, up to that fateful morning, supposed that his life was as clean and open as the day.

Was his store a "fence" for the plunder of thieves? It must be so.

"We might as well have a look at your place, Mr. Ephraiham?" I said with assumed carelessness. "You see this is rather suspicious."

To my surprise he readily consented saying, "Yes, Mr. Burns, let's get out of this."

I instructed my men to summon the patrol wagon to convey the prisoners and the recovered silver to police headquarters. When Mr. Ephraiham and I stepped out upon the street I called a carriage at his request and we were driven to his store. The place was closed for the holiday.

The Jew produced his keys and let us in and then carefully locked the door behind us. He led me past the precious antiques to the dim back office where the principal piece of furniture was a massive safe of the most improved pattern.

It was no simple matter to unlock that safe, but when it was unlocked the door swung open easily. With a key from his pocket-book Mr. Ephraiham unlocked an inner steel door that disclosed a set of small drawers. A fortune would be secure in those little drawers, I thought, as I watched closely the quick actions of my companion.

Opening the top drawer he took from it a handsome diamond ring. "Mr. Burns, my friend," he said, "we have known each other for a long time. I know you will save me any trouble in this little matter and I want you to accept this ring. It's worth a thousand dollars."

I knew what it meant. It was bribery, but I took the ring although I hardly noticed it I felt that there was a strange fascination about that big safe. The thought flashed through my mind, "What a hiding place for the Bandbury jewels."

Almost involuntarily I took a step towards it. As I did so a ray of sunlight fell from between the closed shutters upon the half-open drawer. A mist of incandescent light—red, blue and yellow—rose from the drawer. It was filled with dazzling gems.

I could not suppress an exclamation of delight.

The Jew looked up curiously.

"The sunlight touched this ring—it is beautiful," I said to allay his suspicions.

That satisfied him that I had accepted the bribe. I told him that if it would not trouble him too much I would like to have him step down to police headquarters to identify the two burglars. He walked to the station and waited in the outer office.

Seeking the chief inspector I said, "The Bandbury jewels I believe are in Mr. Ephraiham's safe." Then I telephoned to Judge Bandbury asking him to come to the station as fast as his carriage would bring him

Meanwhile we took the two prisoners before Mr. Ephraiham. He could identify them, he said, and had only listened to their infamous proposition that he might bring them to justice.

Then Judge Bandbury came as white as a sheet. I met him in the chief's office and handing him the ring asked, "Is this part of your property? If so I believe we can restore the rest in a few minutes."

"My wife's ring!" he said hoarsely. "Yes, I could swear to its identity."

Mr. Ephraiham did not know Judge Bandbury or he would not have taken us all back to his store so readily, where I had purposely "forgotten" my overcoat. When the chief asked him to open the safe he was very pale but he unlocked it and the inner compartment also.

I seized the top drawer and held it before the Judge's eyes. He shook with emotion as he gazed upon the gorgeous display.

Poor Mr. Ephraiham broke down completely. He confessed that he bought the jewels of an unknown man, but he had not sold them, only a few small stones of least value.

"You are a receiver of stolen goods at any rate," said the chief, and I put the handcuffs on the man as a matter of precaution.

"Mr. Lowndes' silver is recovered and here are the Bandbury jewels. As it is after one o'clock I think I am entitled to my Christmas breakfast," I said to the chief.

"One moment," said Judge Bandbury, and after a whispered consultation with the chief he continued: "You have worked hard and been much troubled by these diamonds, and I have permission to give you this ring which you recovered to-day, and also this scarf-pin to show that I appreciate what you have done."

"Yes, go to breakfast, Burns," said the chief. "I will lock up the prisoner."

That is how I had diamonds for breakfast.

THE END.

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BY SALLIE JOY WHITE.

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IN undertaking this department of so much importance to every woman, young or old, I wish it to be as helpful as possible to every one who reads it. I want to say something that shall be what each one of you needs to hear, whether she be the young girl in her city home, or another girl on the hill farm of New England, or the prairie farm of the West, or of the fruit ranch of California. I want to help the young wife and the older matron, and I hope that even "Grandma," who surely has not gotten away from the interest which attaches to dainty, pretty things, will find enough to interest her.

We want to make this sewing corner one of the most comfortable and cozy of all COMFORT'S corners, as well as one of the most interesting. You know how it is in the real home; what good times are had when the work-baskets come out and all sit down to a pleasant hour of work, how fingers and tongues fly in friendly rivalry, how much the hands accomplish, while lips discuss questions of domestic economy, consider ways and means, plan pretty fineries for some social affair, or, the subject of clothes being settled, talk over the last new book, or the story in COMFORT which has interested them all.

Well, I want this department of dress to be just as cozy and just as pleasant as that, and above all, I want it to be genuinely helpful. It must tell of something that is fitting as well as fashionable. It must point the best way from out many ways, and consider clothes from an economical and artistic standpoint.

There is one charm of it all. It is quite possible to attain both economy and artistic result in the same toilette. I often go so far as to say that nothing is impossible to the girl with good taste, an artistic sense, an idea of fitness, and ten clever fingers. To be sure she needs a little money, but it is surprising how much less this girl needs than so many others do.

The first lesson that one needs to learn is that of judicious buying. I know how hard it is often to resist the desire to purchase something that strikes the fancy. It is pretty and you want it. If you have plenty of money at your disposal why you can buy it because you can have other things to alternate with it. But if your means are limited and you can have only one new dress each season, then you will need to stop and consider.

In the first place is it something that will go quickly out of fashion? Will you tire of it easily? Is it so pronounced in color or in combination of color that it will assert itself prominently and always betray itself as the one gown you possess? Is it becoming to you? Is it suitable for you? That is the catechism which every woman needs to put herself through when buying a new dress. If she does it carefully she will soon get so accustomed to it, that it will become an involuntary mental process and she can, by and by, decide the moment she looks at a piece of goods whether she should buy it.

I have a case in point that will illustrate precisely what I mean. Not long ago, the pretty girl who received in my kitchen cabinet came to me with a sample of dress goods. It was a piece like the new dress which her special friend had got for winter, and she thought of having one like it, but came first to me for advice.

It was one of the "novelty goods" as they call everything that is out of the line of the standard goods, in a shaggy weave, and of a light brown that would easily fade. I examined it carefully and advised against its purchase, giving my reasons.

Nora, like the sensible girl she is, saw what I meant, and then she asked me if I would go with her to select her dress. I gladly acceded to her request and taking her to one of the most reliable shops in Boston, I gave an hour or two to helping her.

She bought an all-wool cashmere of a reliable make in a dark rich navy blue, and I suggested that she should get an extra yard that she might use in repairing it, if necessary, another season. She had made up her mind to have a silk vest, so she got some good surah that matched the color, and a pretty blue passementerie, with a little gold running through it to outline the vest, trim the collar and sleeves. She had it made with a short round skirt, clearing the ground—for she had got to wear it everywhere, and a skirt that drags is very vulgar—except for the house or a carriage—and finished on the bottom with two narrow ruffles of the material. The waist was a sort of basque, sharply pointed both back and front, with a pleated vest of the surah, also collar and cuffs to the full sleeves.



It is a very refined dress, and will look well and in good style as long as she will want to wear it. She is delighted with it and feels that she has a gown that she can wear anywhere, and she will always be well dressed. Her winter coat was black and that looks well with it, and her hat is black felt trimmed with black velvet with a handsome buckle in front. Everything is good that is on it, and it has a much more ladylike effect than if she had cheap feathers or other, showy, tawdry trimming, whose cheapness is on the very face of it.

She is perfectly satisfied, and when she goes out she has a consciousness of being well dressed. If some one had not given her the proper direction she would have made a mistake at the outset, and would have been dissatisfied before the season closed, although she might not have understood the cause of it. As it is, she has had a practical lesson which she never will forget, for she has the instincts of a true gentlewoman, even though she does wait on the table and do the chamber and parlor work in a family.

And there are thousands of girls like her, who only need to be started to go all right. I do hope I can reach them.

Speaking of the "economics" of dress, I think one of the most practical of them, as well as the prettiest, is the fashion of the Scotch plaid blouses, that obtain this year. They are made of either silk or woolen plaid, and may be worn with any skirt. If you have a black silk dress whose bodice is shabby, you can have a very handsome suit by fixing the skirt in fashionable shape, and having a Scotch plaid blouse to wear with it. A pretty model is here given, made in bright royal Stuart plaid, which has a great deal of red and white in it. In the cut it is shown outside the skirt, but it is prettier when worn with the skirt over it, and either the plaid belt or a pretty velvet bodice.



A blouse of the dark green and blue woolen plaid, worn with a dark woolen skirt of any color, makes a stylish and pretty afternoon dress for a young lady, or a nice school dress for girls.

A pretty blouse is made of China silk, or any wool, like nun's veiling or wool crepon, laid in accordeon plaits, with velvet collar and belt, and sleeves full at the top with close cuffs to the elbows.

Next month I will tell you how to make pretty ribbon girdles for your dress-up gowns, also how to make some trimmings for your dresses.

BRIDAL GOWNS.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.



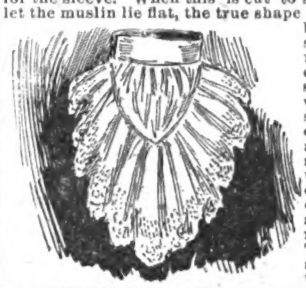
LET me offer some suggestions to the young woman who expects to be married in a month and has been in despair because she can find nothing suitable for a wedding dress that is within the modest limits of her slender purse. It may be made of as rich materials as desired, but is very charming in simpler goods. The white China silks that can be bought at almost any season for seventy-five cents a yard is especially adapted to this style, which requires about sixteen yards; or it can be made with exquisite effect, of white Henrietta or Lansdowne, requiring about six yards at a dollar and fifty cents a yard. The skirt is in circular bell style smooth at front and sides and sweeping out into a moderate train. The top of the basque is a full yoke of white crepe or chiffon arranged on the top of the basque lining. The yoke is gathered at the top and bottom and along the shoulder seams and the lower edge is concealed under the corselet. The fastening is made invisibly in front. Embroidered chiffon is gathered about the pointed corselet and sleeves and a broad satin-edged ribbon is drawn about the edge of the basque and knotted in front, falling in long ends nearly to the edge of the skirt. White ribbon is knotted about the lower edge of the skirt as shown in the illustration.

The bridesmaid's dress is frequently as perplexing a problem as the bride's. A very pretty gown can be made according to the illustration (Figure 2). White India silk or woolen goods may be employed. The little Bolero jacket is of white or colored velvet as preferred.

Now for the benefit of those who have difficulty in fitting the basques. I am going to describe the simplest and most satisfactory way. For half of the basque take three-quarters of a yard of silesia and pin it on the bust as follows. Place one selvage down the centre of the front, keeping the material as much on the straight as is consistent with the natural curve of the figure. Place the first pin at the collar, leaving ten inches of the silesia above and pin the muslin smoothly in place on the widest part of the bust. Pin the muslin round the collar to the shoulder seam cutting long rents in the muslin above, to let it fall in place smoothly.



Pin it around the armhole of the front in the same manner and along the shoulder seam. Itshould now lie on the figure without wrinkle or pleat. The lower part of the front is more difficult. Pin the dart, taking care that the line nearest the front is on the straight of the muslin. The second dart will be the longer and will take up the most material. Keep the seam under the arm as much on the bias of the material as is consistent with making the muslin lie perfectly smooth. The front is now finished and the most difficult part over. For the back, pin the muslin on the figure, keeping it straight in the centre of the back and leaving about three inches above the neck. Pleat the edge of the silesia (of course this is for half the back) to exactly correspond with the curve in the middle of the back. Pin the muslin smoothly across the back without straining it or putting it out of the straight, outlining the curved side which joins the side piece of the back, and the hollow for the sleeve. When this is cut to shape enough to let the muslin lie flat, the true shape being indicated by indenting the silesia with the nail, mark out carefully the shoulder seam which must lie smoothly but easily. When all is marked and roughly cut, unpin the material and cut it out smoothly according to the marks and pins. The side bodies are then done in the same way.



The side body of the back must have the material on the straight with the waist line, which will make both edges much bias when cut. Do not pull the silesia to coincide with the shape. Be careful to leave sufficient length below the waist line. The edge of the back side body which is to be sewed to the back will be more on the bias than that to be sewed to the front side body. For the front side body, when the silesia is pinned on the figure the edge joining the front must be as nearly as possible on the straight. For a very stout figure it is sometimes well to make three side pieces instead of two. By following these directions closely I am quite sure that you can secure a satisfactorily fitting basque.

Now for a few hints on the little trifles that add so much to a woman's charm of appearance. A plain gown can be brightened to a surprising extent by the addition of a "fancy front."Take a triangular piece of colored silk or crepe and pleat into a high shirred collar of the same, with a jaunty bow of velvet, the color of the gown, at the fastening, which should be on the side. Edge with a double row of fine Irish point lace (Figure 3). Another pretty fancy is to gather a deep lace flounce on a heart-shaped shirred piece of some delicate tinted silk or China crepe, with a collar of moire ribbon the same shade. (Fig. 4.)



RUTH PARKTON.

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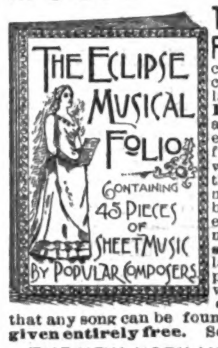
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SUNSHINE AND SYMPATHY FOR THE SHUT INS.

MY DEAR FRIENDS: Does it seem a mockery that I should wish you a "Merry Christmas?" No, I think not; for most of you are God's own children, and the birthday of His Son, your Elder Brother, must be to you a wonderful day, a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving for all that His coming upon earth has brought us. To some of us has come sorrow and pain, and the Christmas merriment finds but a feeble echo in our hearts; but we may have peace, which the world cannot give, and that is infinitely better than fleeting, transitory happiness, which comes and goes at every turn of Fortune's wheel. Are we oppressed by poverty? that must not disturb our peace, for riches alone are powerless to bring contentment. God knows what is best for us, and let us open our hearts to Him, this blessed Christmas-tide, as a flower opens to the sun, trusting His love and mercy.

"We know not verily what is laid up for us. There are such beautiful things put by. In God's house and in God's time there are such treasures."

"We should not be the *victim*, but the *victor*, of circumstances."

"Blessed are those who die for God,
And win the martyr's crown of light;
But he who lives for God may be
A greater conqueror in His sight."

"Thou can'st not to thy place by accident;
It is the very place God meant for thee.
And if thou there small scope for action see,
Do not for this give room to discontent."

"Among so many, can He care?
Can constant love be everywhere?
I asked; my soul bethought of this:
In just that very place of His
Where He hath put and keepeth you,
God had no other thing to do!"

* * * * * * *

"Let me say a word to the Shut-Ins. I feel so thankful for my own health and strength, that I can go out and enjoy the beautiful world the dear Saviour has given us, to hear the birds sing and see the beauties of nature all around us; I can hardly realize what an affliction it would be to be deprived of them. But, dear friends, there is a bright side after all. The blessed Master loves you, and when the time alloted us here on earth is over, you will enjoy the freedom of your new life so much the more. Then there will be no such thing as being a Shut-In; no dulled hearing, no blind eyes, no crooked limbs—all is joy and peace and love. May the Saviour be very near and dear to all of you! I felt sorry to read in Dr Anthony's letter that he was not a Christian, and yet what a Christian spirit he shows, what an example of patience! I hope to read in one of his letters some day that he has become a Christian, and an heir of the kingdom that Jesus has gone to prepare for him.

Mrs. M. E. DWIER, Sharon Hill, Pa."

"This column is indeed all it claims, *Sunshine* and *Sympathy* for the Shut-Ins. True, some of the letters are very sad, but it is like a ray of sunshine to know there are those who read our letters and give us their sympathy; and I find mine is not the hardest lot and grow more patient by reading those same sad letters. I am a Shut-In, in the fullest sense of the word; my life must be passed in my home, and oftentimes for months in one room. But I have a loving family, and many of the comforts of life. I can read, sew, or knit, always lying down, occasionally have a walk across the room, and rarely to the garden. Will some of the sisters send me scraps of silk, plush, worsted, etc., for my quilt? I will knit for them in return. And do not be shocked, dear sisters, but if you have some old novels that you have read, I will pay postage on them. They help me in my lonely hours, and I learn many lessons from good novels. We all have our Bibles, and find much consolation therein, but the human mind calls for something else. Believe me, I sympathize with you all, and believe there is a brighter day coming for us.

Mrs. L. A. MARTIN, Desdimonia, Texas."

Thank you for these kind words for our column. Let us all try to bring in more sunshine, so that it may shine out of our corner into the world around.

"In response to Aunt Minerva's call, I come. You have my heartfelt sympathy and my prayers. I would give more, but a Sister of Charity cannot. From experience I know how hard it is to lie day after day, often in the same position, on the bed of pain. But withal the lot of the sufferer is the lot most blest, where that sufferer relies on God, and confides in Him like a little child. And where are we treading, save where our Lord Jesus Christ has led before us? Was not His life one chapter of agony? What a blessed privilege, if we could only look on it so, to be allowed to suffer! for is it not a privilege to follow where Christ has led? And it is our strongest proof of God's love, for 'whom He loveth, He chasteneth.' Oh sufferer, be of good cheer; great is your reward in Heaven; for if you put your trust in the Lord Jesus, your Gethsemane will have its strengthening angels. A SISTER OF CHARITY."

"I remember once reading of a dear Shut-In sister, who was entirely bedridden, and therefore unable to take active part in Christian work, and this thought troubled her exceedingly. From day to day she would lie upon her couch of pain and regret the fact that she could not go out into the Master's fields and glean among the busy reapers there. One day she soliloquized thus with herself: 'How many are doing something for Christ, but I am a cumberer of the ground. Oh! if I could only do something for Jesus, how much happier I would be! Yet I can do nothing but pray.' Thinking thus, she fell asleep. In her sleep, she dreamed that she was lying as usual upon her bed, lamenting her inability to take an active part in the service of Christ. Filled with fears and longings and doubts, she looked up, and behold! a shining golden ladder reached from her bed unto Heaven, and upon this ladder were a great number of white-winged messengers, ascending and descending, while out over the earth, as far as eye could reach, were the golden harvest fields, with thousands of workers gathering precious sheaves. As she gazed upon them with admiration, she noticed that they all seemed endowed with a wonderful strength, enabling them to bear so well the burden and heat of the day. Finally she observed that this wonderful strength was produced by some mysterious power proceeding from the golden ladder. Wondering what it could be, she asked one of the white-winged messengers, what strange power kept the workers strengthened in the fields beyond. The heavenly attendant replied, 'It is your prayers, my sister.' I tell this story to you today, hoping that it may encourage you who are unable to take an active part in Christian work, to pray for those who are toiling in the fields. We need your prayers, dear Shut-In friends, there is a wonderful power in them; and as a dear 'mother in Christ' wrote me some time since, 'One always realizes the fact, when some one is praying for them.' Thus you see that you have a great work to do, and a glorious mission to perform. Let me exhort you to pray without ceasing for the reapers, and you will one day reap a glorious reward.

SADIE B. JOHNSON, Scarboro, Maryland."

What a beautiful story, and how full of encouragement for those who are laid aside from active work, and find it hard to realize that "they also serve who only stand and wait."

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands in prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

* * * * * * *

"Since you asked the cousins to write about pleasant things, I will tell of the pleasant picnic that 28 of my friends had for me this summer. We camped in a shady grove near by my home, and had a great amount of harmless fun and real enjoyment. Of course we had dinner too, and a good one it was. Some of you will agree with Owen Meredith in saying:

'Oh hour of all hours the most blest upon earth,
Blessed hour of our dinners!'

Dear invalid cousins, don't you think it would be interesting to exchange opinions on our favorite authors and books? Let us make our column so deeply interesting that those who think us such a stupid set, will come to the key-hole and listen to our bright chats. Do not be discouraged. 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved.' Sometimes when I feel like fretting, this thought of Miss Alcott proves helpful to me: 'When you feel discontented, think over your blessings and be grateful.'

OLIVE R. SHAEFFER, Ohl, Penn."

With love to all, your AUNT MINERVA.

FACTS FOR THE FAIR SEX.

The original pin was a fish-bone.

A Chicago woman recently died from the bite of her pet pug dog inflicted six months ago.

In France there are fifteen women among the thirty-six factory inspectors.

A new invention is that of glass panels in oven doors, enabling cooks to watch the food without opening the door.

London has a firm of women tea merchants who have bought an estate in Ceylon, and employ women as blenders, tasters, packers and agents. Packing is considered the most difficult part of the business, but this is being rapidly mastered.

Princess Marie Bibesco, a young woman 24 years of age, has lately succeeded in swimming the Hellespont—Dardanelles Straits—from the European to the Asiatic Shore, and thus ranges her name alongside of those of the classic Leander and the poetic Byron.

The origin of the leap year privilege to woman probably arose from the fact that in 1228 the Scotch Parliament passed a law permitting any maiden to propose to the man she loved. In case of non-acceptance he could be fined as high as $500 according to his means, unless he could prove that he was engaged to someone else.

In New York City a man and a woman are engaging in a long distance, go-as-you-please piano-playing contest. The man smokes and the woman chews gum. They are fed by attendants, and to see the fair contestant eat a slice of pie without missing a note is alone worth the price of admission. As they each play different tunes, the combined result is an awful hash.

ODDITIES.

The ulster overcoat originated in Ireland.

"Boodle" is derived from Dutch and German words meaning pocket or purse.

The jest about red-headed girls and white horses dates back many centuries.

The first nickle-in-the-slot machines were made by Egyptian priests and turned on an urn of holy water.

The drums of Servian regiments are placed on little two-wheeled carts, drawn by big dogs, the drummer following.

A lady living near Batavia, Ohio, has a churn which has been in her possession for 55 years and which has made over $10,000 worth of butter.

Certain cocoanut trees in India, almost entirely dead and lifeless, have been revived and made to bear abundantly by placing salt at the roots.

The name "pound" as a place for keeping stray animals arose from the English law that the owner had to pay one pound sterling before he could recover his stock.

In olden times suicides were buried at cross-roads with a stake driven through the body. The stake was of willow, which grew rapidly and would therefore more surely mark the spot.

Charles V asked to see his own funeral celebrated in the cathedral. It was done with the most minute detail, and made such a frightful impression upon him that he died two days later.

During the reign of Henry V the English Parliament passed a law requiring all the geese in England to be counted. The sheriff of every county was required to furnish six arrow feathers from each goose.

The old master Murillo was once decorating a monastery when one of the monks asked him to paint a picture for him. Having no canvas, Murillo painted "The Madonna of the Napkin" which is still preserved.

The colored globes seen in drug store windows originated in the retorts and jars of various drugs, remedies and mixtures with which the old apothecaries and alchemists surrounded themselves. The Moors of Arabia and Spain were the first to introduce them.

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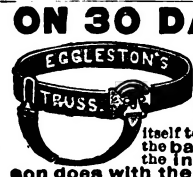
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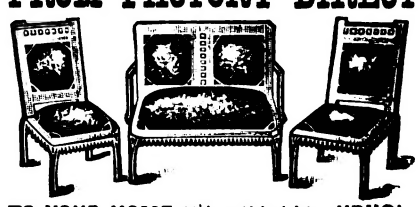


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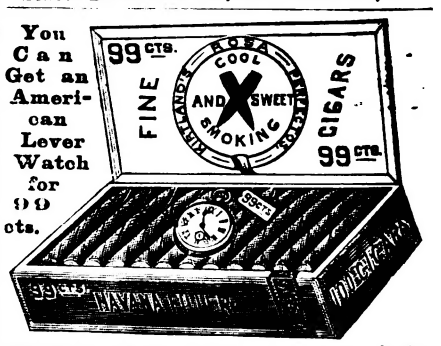
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The World's Fair Through a Woman's Spectacles.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY ALICE TURNER.

THE FIRST thing that would strike a stranger entering the grounds of the World's Fair in September, 1892, would be the stillness of the place. But there are over seven thousand men at work, hammering, sawing and working as noisily as any other workmen, but so great are the vast spaces that their noise is hardly noticeable.



STATUE OF LIBERTY.

There is an almost theatrical impression from this collection of buildings so unusual in design and size. The huge white structures rising in every direction seem like palaces suddenly transported from far-off lands. The men at work upon what seems a high wall of marble, appear to move aimlessly about, but suddenly you see two halves of a huge arch coming together by the force of an unseen engine, and a building begins to take form hundreds of feet above your head.

Just now the World's Fair seems like a city in process of construction. You reach the grounds over roads almost impassable for light carriages, because of the heavy teams that have cut deep ruts through in every direction. But once inside the grounds, approaching from the south, and you catch glimpses of long stretches of roof, broken by towers, and rising above the shrubberies to the shores.

The Fisheries Pavilion rises symmetrical and unmistakable close to the borders of the lake. It has the appearance of the great pleasure houses of the Arabian Nights, and the least observant of visitors cannot fail to retain some impression of this wonderful building with its delicate pavilions and grotesque decorations.

The picture is one not easily forgotten even when seen at this present state of unfinished work; and when completed with its awnings and draperies of flags—or at night with its wonderful circles of electric lights, it will be a part of a pageant that represents skill, noble design and wonderfully patient work.

From the Art Building one can look for nearly a mile over the waterway, whose beauty is full of serenity and artistic finish. But just across this delightful water parkway, the Illinois State Building, looking like a huge dry goods emporium, thrusts itself into view.

All the principal buildings on the grounds can be reached by water, and the little pleasure boats are already making round trips of the waterways, giving the visitors a look at the progress of this wonderful Exposition.

It is from the main court or Plaza that the best comprehensive view of the process of construction can be had. The mighty front of the Main Exhibition Building, the Administration Building with its well-balanced lines rising against the sky in unbroken perspective, fills up one side of the quadrangle. On the northerly side are grouped the Hall of Mines, the Electrical Building and the Transportation Building.

The whole scheme is of noble design and in eminent good taste.

The Womans Building is nearer completion than any of the other buildings. Its white statues tower against the sky, and its broad corridors are open to the public. This building covers nearly four acres; its architect is Miss Sophia Hayden of Boston. The whole building shows clearly how precedent may be used with intelligence. Its structure, its decorative points, the dignified simplicity of the scheme make it an appropriate and beautiful building.



SOPHIA G. HAYDEN.

The Illinois State Building, although not outwardly deserving of mention, will be noticeable for the beauty of its decorations which are under the charge of Miss Ida Burgess of Chicago. Her designs for the reception room and library are unique and beautiful and were selected over a large collection of other designs. She has designed the decorations of several of the finest residences of Chicago.

A picturesque part of the present state of the buildings are the workmen. Living in barracks, living almost the lives of soldiers, they represent a side of this great work of construction that is of interest to thousands of working men all over the country. Joiners, masons, truckmen, carpenters, every trade and almost every nationality are gathered here for one common purpose.

Those who visit the shores of Lake Michigan a year from now will see the results of their work in a beautiful city, wonderful beyond all description.

At the junction of the North Lagoon with Lake Michigan stands an exact reproduction of a United States coast-line battle-ship, and here the Naval Exhibit will be given. All the uniforms of our sailors, from 1775 to 1848, will be shown.

The grounds are not quite a mile and a half long, but they contain more than five hundred acres. The decoration of the buildings is, as a rule, in good taste; indeed, it is wonderful that such an undertaking should have reached its present stage of completion without more evidence of bad taste.

Doubtless the World's Fair will have its "Columbus in Butter," and perhaps even butter has its place in the art education of the country.

One of the projectors of the Exhibition has said that the Fair Buildings at present were "Just a sketch for future work." The Agricultural Building and the Building of the Institute of Fine Arts, are imposing and beautiful structures. Indeed, to one unused to such vast undertakings, the creation of these huge buildings seems an impossibility; and, looking forward to next summer when they will be filled with the treasures and wonders of the world, and crowded by vast throngs of pleasure-seekers, we can but admire the wonderful enthusiasm and enterprise which has given this opportunity to the world.

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HOMING PIGEONS.

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THE name, "homing pigeon," is given to birds that are trained to carry messages. The name is expressive, signifying that the bird seeks its home; this is the trait that renders it valuable.

The name carrier is used to designate all birds that carry messages.

Ancient history says that 43 B.C. Brutus communicated with the consuls by pigeons that flew over the heads of the besiegers. It is well established that the ruler of Syria and Egypt in 1145, had a regular postal pigeon service.

From his residence, routes over which the birds flew radiated to the farthest point of his dominions. All along these routes, at convenient distances, towers were built for watchmen, whose business it was to look out for the pigeons and care for them.

During the years of the triumphs of Napoleon I, certain men of London established pigeon posts in France and adjacent countries; by means of these they obtained news of the results of his campaigns earlier than any one else, and were able to speculate intelligently.

They were used when Paris was besieged in 1870, and in the later days of the siege trained hawks were introduced by the Germans and were used to kill the pigeons.

Experience with the homing pigeon shows that the flight of this bird is not certain unless it has been trained, and unless atmospheric conditions are favorable to its flight.

It is common, in training pigeons, to make them fly from one station to another fifty or more miles apart. To explain how it is that these birds find their way home when released, is a difficult matter. It cannot be instinct alone, for if it be night, or if there be a fog, the bird can do nothing.

Experienced fanciers say that the birds depend solely upon observation and intelligence.

It is necessary to state that pigeons will fly only towards their homes. The idea that they will fly in any direction at command is absurd and without foundation.

In Belgium the flying of pigeons is a great national sport, they are first flown at the age of five or six months a distance of five miles. This distance is regularly increased to one hundred and eighty miles, which is thought to be all they can do well the first year. The second season birds have been known to cover 500 miles.

Atmospheric conditions have a strong influence over their flight. Birds of the best breed will fly four hundred miles in ten hours in favorable weather, but in bad weather the same birds will take two or three days to make the same distance, and often cannot fly at all.

In England country physicians make use of the homer by leaving them with the distant families whom they visit, to be sent off with a message when their services are needed.

Pigeons are generally kept in lofts specially devoted to their use. Their home should be as conspicuous as possible. Some birds are more easily taught than others, but all require the same special training.



Those who have visited Venice, will remember the colony of pigeons of St. Mark's Square. None of these birds have been trained, yet if they were taken away from Venice and set free they would doubtless find their way home.

These birds are fed daily, a pious lady having left a bequest for their maintenance. Small bags of "feed" are sold on the square, and as soon as these birds see a stranger with a bag in his hand, they instantly swoop down upon him for the proffered repast.

An American fancier in speaking of his method of training young birds, says: "I take twenty-five young birds, three weeks old, take them a mile from home and set them free. They will return home without fail. Then I double the distance until fifty miles are reached, then the distance is increased to 100, and then to 200 miles." A long rest is given the birds between long jumps.

The experiment of flying birds from Rome, Italy, to Belgium, was tried in 1868. The distance is nine hundred miles. Five hundred miles of this country was unknown to the birds.

Of the two hundred sent out only twenty returned. As the Alps stood in the line of flight, and as the birds must have flown around the mountains, it is a wonder that any of them returned.

In Belgium they are trained for annual races, and in Russia the Minister of War has ordered the expenditure of $10,000 for pigeon training. In Germany and France, also, they are trained for military purposes.

In the United States numerous experiments have been made. In 1878 the Signal office sent some to the great Indian fighter General Miles, who was then stationed in Dakota. He tried to train and use the birds, but without success. It was thought that a species of hawk, common to that region, persistently hunted them down.

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SUFFERED 10 YEARS. My husband has suffered for ten years with indigestion and nervousness. Less than one Giant box of Oxien did him more good than anything he has taken in those ten years. It is indeed a wonderful medicine. . . Mrs. E. F. ALLGOOD, Petersburg, Va. **INDEED WONDERFUL.**

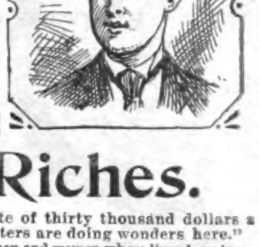


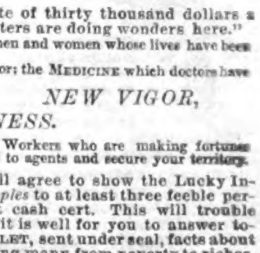
RHEUMATISM. One box of Oxien made me feel like a new man. It does just what you say it will. It cured me of rheumatism and sick headache. Enclosed you will find $5.00 for which send me another lot. . . . . CHAS. BUELL, Ridge Farm, Ill. **LIKE A NEW MAN.**

9 YEARS OF AGONY. After being under the doctor's care nearly nine years and receiving little benefit I tried Oxien. It has done wonders for me. One and a half boxes brought me good health and others here are receiving the same benefits from it. I enclose $18.00 for another lot of this Wonderful Food and Plasters. . . Mrs. Wm. BANTZ, Howe, Neb. **DOCTORS FAILED.**









From Poverty to Riches.

One agent says: "*In half an hour I have sold ten dollars worth* (or at the rate of thirty thousand dollars a year profit) and still they are coming for it. The Oxien Electric Porous Plasters are doing wonders here."

Not a day passes but what scores of letters like the foregoing reach us from grateful men and women whose lives have been saved by our Wonderful Food for the Nerves, Oxien.

Every hour brings fresh proof that Oxien is the FOOD which Scientists have searched for; the MEDICINE which doctors have longed for and the RELIEF which hopeless sufferers have prayed for. It gives—

NEW LIFE, NEW HOPE, NEW POWER, NEW VIGOR, NEW STRENGTH, NEW HAPPINESS.

It is a Godsend for the weak and weary; and a Godsend to thousands of Home Workers who are making fortunes introducing it to their friends and neighbors. Write at once for free samples and terms to agents and secure your territory.

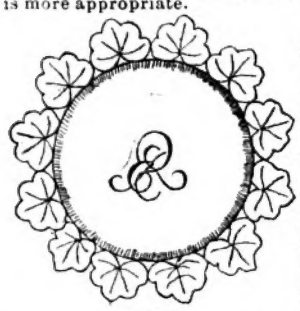
A BIG OFFER 50c. MADE IN A MINUTE! If you will agree to show the Lucky Investment Booklet we send you with *free samples* to at least three feeble persons, we will send you in advance a 50 cent cash cert. This will trouble you but a minute, and as we pay in advance it is well for you to answer today and also learn from our DOLLARS BOOKLET, sent under seal, facts about the *two hundred and fifty thousand dollars we are giving away as premiums*, lifting many from poverty to riches.

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ALTHOUGH the prizes for the Christmas designs have been announced, there were, as already stated, many pretty suggestions that did not reach us in time for the competition, and we will give the best of these now, as there are always birthdays to be remembered, and other occasions when giving is desirable.

Mrs. Ernest Rankin of Marquette, Michigan, sends us a very pretty design for a doily. While doilys are not articles of general use in many families, still as a wedding gift nothing is more appropriate.



DOILY.

It is made of white linen, and can be embroidered either with linen floss, or with white wash silk. Directions: With a lead pencil draw a circle the size of a fruit plate on the linen, then cut from paper a geranium leaf about three inches long. Trace it out on the linen, just outside the circle, repeating the drawing until the circle is surrounded by leaves. Embroider circle and leaves in buttonhole stitch; vein the leaves in outline stitch and when finished cut out around the leaves. A monogram or initial can be worked in the center if desired.

Among the many suggestions for novel workbaskets the following is worthy of attention; the inventor did not send her name so credit cannot be given her. Take four strawberry baskets, line each one neatly with cambric or silk, as preferred, cover the outside of each basket with velvet or silk of contrasting color, or gild or bronze it instead. Then tack the four baskets together meeting in center; on top place a large and pretty bow of ribbon. To each basket add an inside pocket, for scissors and penknife, spools and emery, needles and thimbles, and a chamois eyeglass cleaner, made as follows: Cut two pieces of chamois skin the size of a silver dollar, bind each with narrow white ribbon, then catch together. It will be handy for grandma's spectacles when she uses the basket.

Every woman knows the convenience of having scissors, needles and emery ball at hand, and will appreciate the working chatelaine suggested by Mrs. H. Church, Geneva, N. Y.

The one given is made with yellow ribbons. Take satin ribbon about one inch in width, cut in four lengths. The first length should be about 10 inches, the second 12 inches, the third 14 inches and the fourth 15 inches. Fasten the four lengths together at the top with bows of the ribbon, and, if desired, the chatelaine can be fastened about the waist with a ribbon, or pinned on at the waist. At the end of the shorter length fasten an emery ball, to the next length a little heart shaped pincushion, to the next a little needlebook, the scissors attach to the longest piece of ribbon. These can be changed if one prefers and the scissors fastened to the length most convenient.



CHATELAINE.

In the larger cities the stores are filled with novelties for the holidays, and perhaps the Bees would like to hear what the Boston stores, for instance, have to please and interest the industrious, and that could be made at home. First, there is a dainty cover for a small table, this can be easily made; it is about three feet square and is made of goblin cloth, a heavily ribbed cotton, but coarse linen will make an equally pretty one. The edges are turned up about an inch and feather-stitched down with a heavy buttonhole coil of pale blue; over the surface are stamped, as nearly together as one may fancy, clover leaves, these also worked in blue floss. Any other color can be used, but the blue is very dainty and effective.

At the same counter, which was surrounded by admiring purchasers, was a Poppy Pillow, a gift that would be more than welcome to any friend who suffers from sleepless nights, as the poppy induces slumber. The pillow shown was covered with white silk mull over crimson silk, with a full soft ruffle of the mull as a finish. The pillow is filled with crushed poppy seeds. If one does not care to use as expensive material as mull or silk, a thin scrim over satine will prove almost as pretty. Embroidered on the mull in crimson floss was the following: "Sleep, balmy sleep."



SPIDER WEB AND SICKLE.

Of course one could use some other words expressive of rest as, "Pleasant dreams," or "The stuff that dreams are made of." The little white everlasting that grows wild in almost every part of the United States could be used to fill a slumber pillow, if poppy seeds cannot be readily obtained.

There are all sorts of work-baskets, of dolls, of cases for gloves, handkerchiefs, cigars and neckties to be seen; but we leave the store windows for a future talk and return to some of the clever ideas sent in by members of the Hive.

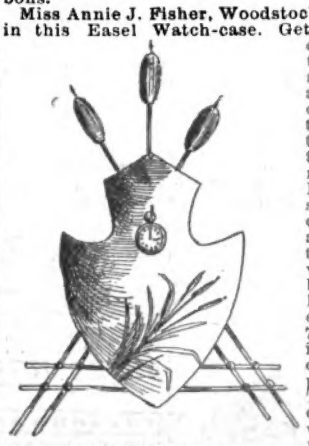
Miss Edith Stevens of Chetopa, Kansas, sends a very original and pretty pattern for wall decoration. Her directions for making this desirable ornament are as follows: "You can get a good shape for the sickle by laying one upon cardboard and outlining it with a pencil. Then cut out the cardboard, lay it on velvet, silk or satin, and cut the material 1-2 inch larger than the cardboard. Then cover neatly lining with cambric of a similar color. Now take a ball of silver tinsel, split it to make it as fine as possible, and make your web across the inside curve of your sickle by catching it here and there at the intersections with very fine thread. Black velvet for the blade of the sickle; brown for the handle, and a bow of yellow ribbon as a finish. A spider made of cotton, painted, with legs of fine wire, adds to this novel and original ornament which is deserving of special praise.

Another idea that is worthy of notice comes from ZellaPage, Cadmus, Kansas, and is not only ornamental but can be made useful as well. This is called A Spider's Wed. It is 32 inches in diameter and is made with a piece of fencewire. Make a ring of the wire, and cover with silver or gold tinsel, as preferred. No wire is used inside the web. The tinsel cord must be tightly drawn from the wire to the center, forming definite lines like the spokes of a wheel. Then, beginning at the center, fasten your tinsel cord around these spokes until your web is completed. Small hooks can be fastened on the wire ring, and will be found convenient to hang glove or boot-button fasteners, scissors and other small objects on. The web can be suspended by ribbons.



SPIDER'S WEB.

Miss Annie J. Fisher, Woodstock, N. B., sends in this Easel Watch-case. Get three small cat-o'-nine tails or rustic sticks and after thoroughly drying them, gild and tie together at the top with a ribbon bow. Fasten two sticks on for cross bars, at a suitable distance apart, with small brass tacks. Make a shield of cardboard 7 1-2 by 4 1-2 inches and cover with plush or silk. This can be ornamented with forget-me-nots, hand-painted or embroidered. Near the top of the shield fasten a small brass hook on which to hang the watch. The shield can be fastened to the easel underneath the ribbon bow.



EASEL WATCH-CASE.

Among the many ideas for handkerchief cases the following one to be made of paper is pretty and is easily made. Mrs. E. E. Blood of Haysville, Kansas, sends directions as follows: Take two pieces of cream colored blotting paper 8 by 10 inches, pink the edges and line each piece with sheet wadding. Take two Chinese napkins with colored borders, gather three sides slightly with invisible stitches on to the wadding, cutting off the napkin on the fourth side to fit the wadding. Put the two halves together and punch holes at the back edges and tie with bows of ribbon, and put ribbon ties at the front edge. The wadding is caught on to the blotting paper with invisible stitches, if these stitches show run a vine of embroidery over them. The Chinese napkins caught to the wadding make clever little pockets for the handkerchiefs. The blotting paper can be ornamented by a graceful ribbon bow, or by a hand-painted spray of flowers.

Mrs. Blood also sends a suggestion for a spectacle case or bag for a handkerchief. Take a piece of black satin about eight inches long and three broad, line it with white or lavender silk. Draw up with black or lavender ribbons. This can be fastened at the waist and will prove a great convenience for grandma, who can then always have her spectacles at hand. This little bag could also be used for the smelling bottle and handkerchief, or for any little article that one likes to have at hand.

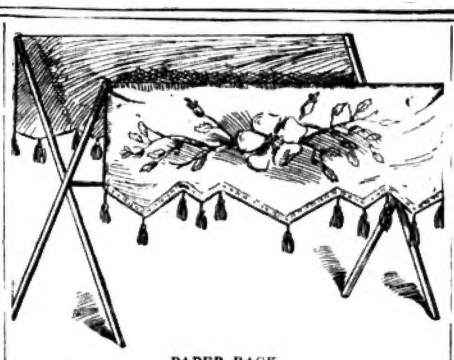


PAPER HANDKERCHIEF CASE.



One gift that any gentleman is sure to appreciate is a box for his cuffs and collars. Mrs. M. M. Green, Emporia, Kansas, describes one that can be easily made.

GENTLEMAN'S KNIT COLLAR AND CUFF BOX:—Material, half pound carpet warp, coarse wool, of any color, 4 coarse steel knitting needles, 5 cents worth of glue and the the same of varnish, 1-2 yard lining, 1 or 2 tin pails to shape box and cover over. For the bottom: Set up three stitches on each of three needles, knit round and widen often enough to make the work lie flat, till it is as large as the bottom of the pail, that the box is to be shaped over. For the side set up 58 stitches, knit on two needles; knit two and seam one until you have a strip of sufficient width to cover the pail, then bind off. Sew it together and sew on to the bottom over and over. Knit the cover the same as the bottom, only a little larger. A knit lace of any pattern one likes may be used as a finish for the cover. Put the glue in a tin cup and turn water over it, set on the stove till melted; starch the box and cover in the glue, put the box on one tin pail and the cover over the bottom of the other pail. Before the cover is put over the pail wind two or three thicknesses of pasteboard around to make it large, so as to have the cover shut over the box. Dry quickly, take off from the pails and



PAPER RACK.

varnish. Cut a pasteboard as wide as the box is deep and long enough to go around on the inside of the box, cover the outside and half of the inside with the lining. Cut pasteboard No. 2, cut round just large enough to fit into that and cut a circular hole in the middle leaving but a narrow strip an inch on the inside; cover the upper side of pasteboard No. 2, cut the lining same as in pasteboard, cut pasteboard No. 3 about two-thirds as high as the box, and long enough to fit into the circle that is cut out of No. 2, join the ends together and line the inside and half, or over, of the outside and slip into the circle of No. 2, and fasten edges of the lining of No. 1 and No. 3, slip into No. 1 and slip the whole into the knit box, line the cover and it will be completed. M. M. G.

Mrs. Josie Simon, Swan, Ind., sends directions for a paper rack. A useful article that will surely be appreciated by every member of the family. Get four strips of walnut, each 28 inches long, 1 1-2 inches wide and 1-4 of an inch thick. Round off one end of each, and bore a quarter inch hole 1-2 inch from the end. Then 12 inches from the same end bore a 1-2 inch hole. Take two small round sticks, or small rattans, 14 inches long, and one thicker one same length; cross two of the walnut pieces at the lower holes for one end, and the other two for the other end, connecting with the stick or rattans, the smaller ones above, and the larger one in the holes 12 inches from ends, and your frame is completed and will stand firmly. Now take a piece of plush, velvet or felt, 42 inches long and 14 inches wide. Vandyke each end and finish these ends with chenille or brass ornaments. Fasten the plush to the upper rounds of the frame and to the ends. A large pocket can be placed under each side for letters, lead pencils, etc. The outside can be painted or embroidered. A handsome monogram makes an artistic finish. This rack can be used for music if desired.

Next month I shall have something to tell the Bees about house-furnishing. And now let me suggest that one of the most acceptable of gifts is a year's subscription to COMFORT, which costs but twenty-five cents. You have all noticed the great improvement in its different deparments, and the New Year will bring many more original and attractive features for young and old. This is the time to make some friend happy by sending them COMFORT for a year. With Christmas greetings,

BUSY BEE.

HOME-MADE DOLLARS.

A stamp sent to Mrs. Marshall Gray, Chapel St., New Haven, Conn., will bring ladies facts about Kitchen Kohinoor (Discovery for giving brilliant lasting polish to tin, brass, glass, gold and silverware) telling how to make money at home.

A MODEL WASHING MACHINE.

[From the New England Farmer.]

Voluntarily, and without solicitation or suggestion, the FARMER recommends the "Busy Bee" washer as indispensible to every house wife. It is made by the Lake Erie Manufacturing Company, No. 145 East 13th Street, Erie, Pa., and costs $2. We recommend it because it does the best of work, runs easy, saves time, money and clothes. See advertisement.

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VELVET and PLUSH to set off and perfect your crazy patchwork quilt. Birds, flowers, sprays, etc. Pieces bought at Slipper factory bargain remnant sale. Assorted and painted by us in all colors. All for 25 cts. ART STORE, Box 298 Augusta, Me.

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A RELIABLE WOMAN

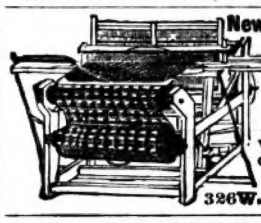
Wanted in every County to establish a Corset Parlor for the sale of Dr. Nichols' Celebrated Spiral Spring Corsets and Clasps. Wages $40 to $75 per month and expenses. We furnish complete stock on consignment; settlements monthly; $3 Sample Corset free. Send 18 cents postage for sample and terms.
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To reduce our stock of Music we will send by mail, post-paid, 70 pieces full sheet music size, including songs, marches, waltzes, quadrilles, etc., by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Mozart, etc., for 20c. Comrades and 100 songs, words and music, 6c. Satisfaction given or *money back*. Read this: Mr. Hathaway:—Am very much pleased with the music sent me; it is worth ten times the money. R. J. Allen, Hoosick, N. H. Address C. HATHAWAY, 339 Wash. St., Boston, Mass.



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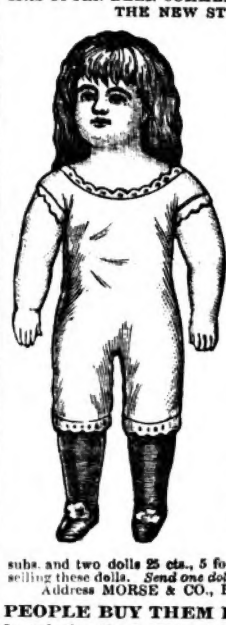
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A Child's Love for a Doll.

HAS OFTEN BEEN COMMENTED ON.—READ ABOUT THE NEW STYLE DOLLS.



Modern invention is always making startling improvements, and the latest thing just brought out is for the young people who live away from the large cities. We have just secured sale of a new kind of dolls that are *absolutely indestructible*, and we show you in this cut here how they look; they are about 18 inches tall, and made of elegant colored goods. In getting this doll up we have overcome the great trouble of weight, which has made such a cost in the past when shipping by mail or express. These dolls are so constructed that you fill them with cotton, hair, or sawdust, sewing them up after receiving; it takes but a few minutes to do this, and you save nearly one dollar, and get a pretty, substantial doll for almost nothing. They will last for years and be a joy forever to any miss who desires a *handsome dollie* as nice as her own sweet self.

To introduce these goods at once, and add another million to "COMFORT'S" eleven hundred thousand circulation, we will send one doll absolutely free (all charges paid by us) to every three-months' trial subscriber enclosing 15 cents; two subs. and two dolls 25 cts., 5 for 50 cts. Many make money selling these dolls. *Send one dollar for twelve, and try it.*
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PEOPLE BUY THEM BY THE HUNDREDS.
In ordering the second lot here is what *one* Lady says:

15 Concert St., Keokuk, Iowa.

MORSE & Co.,

Sirs:—Dolls received. Enclosed find money order, for which send me fifty (50) more of your indestructible dolls, express paid. Please send soon as you can, as I already have orders for a number of them. Mothers and children seem equally delighted with the dolls. Resp'y, MRS. W. H. FOUTS.

Now that Holidays are coming, every child will want a present, so order to day and be the first in the field.



BY ELIZABETH SARGENT CURTIS.

Copyright, 1892, by the Publishers of COMFORT.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS to you all!

It is a pleasant time to make one's advent into a happy family circle, as I am sure COMFORT'S is. The whole wide world is full of peace and good will, and the very spirit of the day makes a cordial greeting certain.

So I am glad that it has fallen out that I take COMFORT'S housekeeper's chair at this festival season, and I hope we shall like each other so well that our relation of "friends in council" may continue for a long time.

It is the intention of the Editor that this department shall be a really helpful one, and he has honored me with an invitation to help him make it so. He believes that one practical housekeeper can help another, and that it is wiser to maintain a sort of advisory council, rather than to attempt to run a cooking school, and on this point I am fully in accord with him.

The intent is to make this department as helpful as possible to every housekeeper. All the new ideas in cooking will be given, and every effort will be made to keep it up to a high practical standard.

Receipts and directions will be given in plain, straightforward English, and French terms will not be used if their English equivalent can be found. If the French word must be used, it will be explained, so that every one can understand it. There is a great deal of useless mystery made over certain dishes, that are considered high delicacies. The very idea of them frightens the housekeeper, accustomed to the plain, every-day fare of the average family table. If she really understood their composition, she would laugh at her own fears, and face the task of attempting them with a light heart.

In connection with these dishes with the appalling names, I always think of a story I once heard. A lady gave a children's party, and among the dishes she entertained them with at supper were beef croquettes.

"Do you know what that is you are eating?" she asked one of the little guests who was evidently enjoying the toothsome dish.

"Yes'm," was the reply. "Hash."

And so with many another dish with a fine sounding name. It is only some family dainty masquerading under a foreign name.

What we will try to do will be to get really at the thing itself, then those of you who like to do so, may call it by its foreign name, feeling assured that you have got on your own table the veritable dish that you have, perhaps, enjoyed at Delmonico's, or Sherry's, or Young's, or Parker's, or if you have not partaken of it yourself, you know those who have, and you can duplicate it for them. Ten to one, if you live in the country, and have real cream, fresh butter, smelling of clover and new-mown hay, and newly laid eggs, you can improve on Delmonico and the rest.

It is possible that the older women, who have years of experience behind them, may find in this department many things that they already know. But they must not grow impatient over that, but must recollect that there are hundreds of young women, every day, taking their places as housekeepers, to whom all the ways of domestic life are as a sealed book.

The young men who are on small salaries, and who expect their wives to help them, are taking these wives from the large ranks of working women. They have been sales girls, sewing girls, stenographers, typewriters, teachers, all winning their own way, but doing so outside the home.

They bring to their new duties, loving, loyal hearts, clear brains and shrewd understanding, made clear and shrewd by contact with the world. They have cleverness, readiness and sense, and above all they have a strong desire to keep up their own end in this new partnership, where they stand on equal footing with the other partner.

And, by the way, by and by I shall have a special word to say about this same partnership, and the word will be for both parties, but at present there is no time, so it will have to wait.

These women, the young housekeepers, who come to their new kingdom without experience in that particular line, need only direction. They have the energy and the ability, and they need only to be told how to direct the one and utilize the other, to become very successful.

It is to this class that much of the information must be specially directed, and all the experienced housekeepers will, I am sure, feel like helping all they can in this work of making their "girls" competent rulers of the homes which their "boys" set them over as rulers.

These girls are to be something more than housekeepers, they are to be the home makers. Can any sweeter, more sacred task be set for a woman to do?

I did not mean to make my introduction to you so elaborate, but there is always so much to say in beginning. Now let us get speedily to work over our Christmas dinner.

Now the question is, what are you going to have?

The real old-fashioned Christmas dinner is roast goose, turkey or duck, for not every one likes goose. We have a soup to begin with, if we like, but that is not essential, especially for the housekeeper who does all her own work; and we have vegetables of different kinds, suiting the taste of the family in that respect. The plum pudding is a matter of course, for what would Christmas be without it. Mince pie usually finds a place on the bill of fare, but it is not always tasted, and I think it is just as well omitted; that is, if the hostess has any respect for the digestion of her guests.

In these days, fruit is always possible; there is hardly a place in the country where it is not obtainable, and the same is true of nuts. If you live away from the big towns where you can buy anything you desire, you will surely have some stored away, the result of jolly nutting parties held in the beautiful days of October, after the first frosts have touched the trees and opened the outer coats. And so of fruit; if you are away from the lines of railway traffic you can have apples, and possibly pears, of your own growing. And if you are in one of the fruit districts of the South or Southwest, you may have luscious grapes and big golden oranges.

Thanks to railways and rapid transit, almost every body is within easy reach of the rest of the world, and things that were once counted as the greatest luxuries are now in the list of everyday necessities.

I am going to give you a nice rule for a genuine English plum pudding. For many years my own Christmas pudding came across the ocean to me. It was made early in December and reached me in season for the festival dinner. The receipt I am to give you is the one by which this pudding was made, and is the one given by Mrs. Breton, who is the English woman's household law and gospel.

You will require three-quarters of a pound of suet, one pound of sugar, one pound of grated stale bread crumbs, one pound of raisins, one pound of currants, half a pint of milk, a gill of brandy, a nutmeg, half a teaspoonful of cinnamon, half a teaspoonful of mace, the rind and juice of a lemon, a teaspoonful of salt and nine eggs.

You must chop your suet, stone your raisins and wash your currants. All this to be done first. Then mix the ingredients, except the eggs, which should be beaten until light and added last of all.

The old-fashioned way of cooking it was to boil it in a cloth, and many do that still; but it requires great care to tie it so that the water will not get in and spoil it, and the safest way is to boil it in moulds. If you do not happen to have the melon moulds, you may use your brown bread boiler, or if you have not this, a clean lard or cottolene pail will do. The amount that this rule will make will be enough for two two quart moulds or pails, or four one quart ones. The mould must be well buttered, and filled only two-thirds or three-quarters full, so that the mixture may have room to swell and become light. Cover tightly, so that no water can get in, and bind a strong piece of cloth around the edge of the cover where it meets the pail. Put into boiling water and steam five hours. Do not let the water stop boiling, and keep your teakettle full of boiling water to replenish that in the kettle if it boils away. Leave the puddings covered until you serve them. They may be made several days before using, and they will keep all winter in a cool place, if you do not eat them all on Christmas day. If you do make it several days in advance, it should be steamed at least an hour and a half on the day of serving.

When you are ready to serve the puddings, turn them out into a flat dish and pour half a gill of brandy over them, and stick a twig of holly or some other green in each pudding, as the dishes are on the way to table, just before they are brought inside the door, set fire to the brandy, so that they may be brought in blazing. Serve with a creamy sauce, which you will make in the following way.

Cream, half a cup of butter and a cup of sugar, and add two tablespoonfuls of cream and two tablespoonfuls of brandy. You may do this at any time in the morning and set in a cool place. Just before you are ready to serve the pudding, set the bowl in which your sauce is, into a dish of boiling water, and stir constantly for a minute or two until it becomes creamy, but not hot. If any one objects to the use of brandy, more cream may be added to take its place, and the sauce seasoned with lemon or nutmeg to suit the taste. For myself, in my own family where there are young people growing up, I prefer the latter way, but I do not set up as conscience to the rest of the world. I give both ways, and let each one make her own choice.

For fear some housekeepers may think the foregoing rule too expensive to undertake, I will give another, which is inexpensive, and is also delicious far beyond its cost. It is a pudding which you are not afraid to let the children eat.

For this pudding, you will use two and a half cups of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, one-half a teaspoonful of salt, one-half a saltspoonful of cinnamon, one-half a saltspoonful of nutmeg, one cup of chopped suet, one cup of raisins, one-half a cup of currants, one cup of molasses and one cup of milk. Sift the soda and salt into the flour, and stir in the suet; add the spice to the molasses, mix the milk with it, add to the dry mixture, then stir in the stoned raisins and currants. Steam in a buttered mould five or six hours; the longer the better. Serve with creamy sauce.

You see how inexpensive this pudding is. There are no eggs called for, and at this season of the year, when eggs are so high, this is a most serious consideration. This is also a nice pudding for a Sunday dinner, as it may be made during the week, and just steamed on the day on which it is to be served. For a winter pudding I know no other so nice, and so convenient.

If you think you would like a soup, there is none more appropriate than oyster soup, and that is the one that is usually served with either turkey or goose. For this you will use one quart of oysters, one pint of milk, two slices of onion, four stalks of celery, cut in pieces, one tablespoonful of butter, and half a cup of finely powdered cracker crumbs. Salt to taste, and add half a saltspoonful of pepper. Put on the milk to boil, using a double boiler that the milk may not burn. If you haven't this boiler, a clean tin pail set in a kettle of boiling water will answer the purpose. Into the milk put the slices of onion and the pieces of celery. Put the oysters into a bowl, and pour over them a cup of water, take up each oyster to see that no pieces of shell adhere, and place them in a colander over a pan to drain. Strain the oyster liquor through a fine strainer, and put on to boil. Remove the scum, and when the liquor is clear put in the oysters, and let them simmer, but not boil, until they begin to grow plump and the edges to separate or boil. Strain the milk, return it to the double boiler, add the crumbs, and the liquor in which the oysters have been parboiled, putting the oysters in the meantime where they will keep hot but not cook. When the crumbs are well blended add the butter, seasoning and the parboiled oysters and serve at once.

In preparing your dressing for your fowl, you must be guided a good deal by the taste of your family in regard to the seasoning. Goose ought to have the stuffing seasoned with sage and onions. A good dressing for goose is made by using a pound of salt pork chopped very fine, and mixed with twice its amount of soaked bread or cracker crumbs, an onion chopped fine, and seasoned to taste with sage, salt and pepper. If you do not like the idea of the pork use the moistened bread crumbs seasoned with onion, salt, pepper and sage, into which is stirred a tablespoonful of butter.

Always serve apple-sauce with roast goose. For a turkey stuffing use soaked bread cracker crumbs, made very fine and highly seasoned with sage, thyme, salt and pepper; moisten this stuffing with half a cup of melted butter and one egg well beaten.

For chicken a chestnut stuffing is very nice. Shell a quart of large chestnuts, pour boiling water over them, and remove the inner brown skin. Boil in salted water until it is soft, then mash them very fine. Take half for the stuffing and mix with it one cup of fine cracker crumbs; season with one teaspoonful of salt, one saltspoonful of pepper and one teaspoonful of chopped parsley. Moisten with one-third of a cup of melted butter.

The rest of the chestnuts you may use for a sauce. After the chicken is roasted remove the fat from the dripping pan; add nearly a pint of hot water; thicken with flour which has been cooked in brown butter; add salt and pepper to taste, and the remainder of the chestnuts.

To cook flour in brown butter, use to a tablespoonful of butter the same amount of dry flour. Put the butter in a small sauce-pan, let it melt and brown; add the dry flour and stir until it is perfectly smooth.

To stone raisins, pour boiling water over them, let them stand for a few minutes, then take each raisin between the thumb and finger and push the seed to the surface, break the skin and remove the seed.

To chop suet, free it from the strings, sprinkle flour over it; and it will chop very easily and separate without trouble.

Currants may now be bought all cleaned and ready for use. The housekeeper of to-day has something to be thankful for in being spared one of the most tiresome tasks in cooking. It did require special grace to enable one to keep one's patience while cleaning the formerly dirty mixture called dried currants. Don't buy any other than the prepared currants. If your grocer hasn't them—but he probably has—insist upon his sending for them.

How time flies and space fills up. I meant to have told you of some nice made-over dishes, and I did want to take you to the famous Diet Kitchen of Boston and show you how the invalids and the poor are taken care of, but that must wait until next time, when we will make the visit which I am sure will be both pleasant and helpful.

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Merry, happy Holidays to all!

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The best, cheapest and most appropriate holiday gift for old and young—a year's subscription to COMFORT—costs but twenty-five cents.

The mothers, sisters and sweethearts in the twelve hundred thousand homes, which COMFORT now visits every month, are to be congratulated upon the two new departments we inaugurate with this issue for their special benefit. Under the head of "COMFORT'S Kitchen Chats" and "What Women Wear," two of the ablest and most practical women in America will furnish contributions which will be replete with highly instructive and entertaining facts for the fair sex.

The death of Mrs. Harrison has awakened unusual sympathy and sorrow. No woman to whom the attention of the country has been drawn has won greater esteem and love from all classes and all sections. The White House was not merely the official residence of the President of the United States; it was the typical American home. In all the official pomp and social display that necessarily belongs to the life of the President, Mrs. Harrison has shone brilliantly as the first lady of the land, while, in private life, her christian character, her amiability, her accomplishments and unostentatious charity have won the hearts of all who knew her, and the admiration and respect of the whole people.

Mrs. Harrison was not only a true and faithful wife and mother, devoted to her husband and home, but a highly intelligent and accomplished woman. She was an artist of merit, and much of the White House china was decorated by her own hand. COMFORT readers have been brought near to her by the receipt from the White House kitchen which she contributed to the columns of this paper.

She was deeply interested in all that was lovely and beautiful in nature, and was passionately fond of flowers, the chrysanthemum being her favorite. She passed away in October, the month of Chrysanthemums, and her final resting place was covered with these beautiful flowers.

The tributes of love that have been laid upon her grave are not sweeter or tenderer than the memories of her pure and beautiful life which the American people will forever cherish.

The overwhelming defeat of the Republican party in the late election was the greatest revolution for many years, surprising alike to the politicians and the people. The Democracy have gained control of the government by a decisive majority in the electoral college, the Senate and House of Representatives.

Such a complete overturn in the political affairs of the conntry has seldom occurred, and the causes are not far to seek. There has been great discontent among the masses of the people, arising from the economic and industrial policy of the government which, to their minds, did not operate for the benefit of the people so much as for the advantage of a few. They may be mistaken, but it is their conviction, and they have voted to overturn the policy of protection which has controlled the administration of government for more than thirty years. This dissatisfaction has been most strongly and prominently shown in the organization of the People's Party, especially in the great Western States, where Gen. Weaver, their candidate for President, received many electoral votes which heretofore have been given to the Republican party. Neither of the old parties was acceptable to this new organization, but its great strength in former Republican States, together with the remarkable increase in the Democratic vote, has overthrown the Republican administration and resulted in the election of Mr. Cleveland.

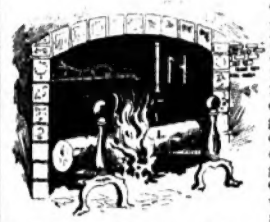
The great uprising throughout the country opens the question whether there may not spring up from the old parties a new political organization that shall comprise the best elements of all, and that shall restore to its original purpose a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

As COMFORT readers will recollect, we stated in a recent issue, that whatever the result of the election might be, the people could be relied upon, in their intelligence and patriotism, to conduct the government for the best good of all. Let us hope that the victors will be found equal to their opportunity.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

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"So dance and sing, and make good cheer,
For Christmas comes but once a year."



BEN JOHNSON'S "Mask of Christmas" presented in 1616 before the court, the following inquiry is made: "Any man or woman that can giveanyknowledge of an old, old, very old gray-bearded gentleman called Christmas, who was wont to visit all sorts of people, both rich and poor, whosoever can tell what is become of him, or where he may be found, let them bring him back again."

Luckily Christmas was not lost, and comes with the yearly feast and welcome.

Of the many causes which make a festival of Christmas-tide are the observances of the establishment and beginning of Christianity from which the season takes its name. But in all nations the winter solstice has been recognized as a season of rejoicing.

An old time English observance of the day was in a procession of men with Old Father Christmas riding at the head. Now and then some of the merry-makers would leave the procession and show their laughing faces at the door of many a poor man; and they were equally ready to present themselves at the mansions of the rich.

The towns rang with their merry voices, and kitchens steamed with the fragrance of the good things prepared for their entertainment. It was a holiday for everyone except the cooks who

"Were busy by day and by night,
In roasting and boiling for taste and delight."

The subject of their Christmas dinners is a trying one; an old Christmas ballad gives a speaking description of the feast as follows:

"Although the cold weather doth hunger provoke,
'Tis a comfort to see how the chimneys do smoke;
Provision is making for beer, ale and wine,
For all that are willing and ready to dine.
Then haste to the kitchen where Christmas is chief,
Plum pudding, goose, capon, minced-pies and roast beef."

The traditions of old customs present an interesting picture of olden time manners. A time when it would seem that there were more innocent fooleries then at the present day, and when all ranks of people took their enjoyments more simply and heartily.

In the twelfth century there were spectacles and pageants at Christmas time, when even learned men forgot to be grave and "played the fool" for the amusement of their friends.

The burning of the Yule log is an ancient Christmas ceremony, transmitted to us from the Scandinavians.

The bringing in and placing the ponderous log on the hearth, destined to crackle a welcome to all comers, was a joyous ceremony. Each one is expected to salute the Yule log, for it is full of good promise and its flame burns out old wrongs and heart burnings.

In Germany Christmas Eve is for children the most joyous night in the year, as they feast their eyes on the Christmas tree.

The tree is arranged in the principal room of the house, and when evening comes the children are assembled in an adjoining apartment. At a given signal the door is thrown open and there stands the Christmas tree. Every branch glittering with little lighted tapers, while all sorts of gifts and ornaments are suspended from the branches, or deposited on tables.

In America the Christmas tree branches forth in all its splendor, and before going to sleep the children hang up their stockings at the foot of the bed, to be filled by Kris Kringle or Santa Claus, who is supposed to descend the chimney with gifts for all good children.

If, however, anyone has been naughty, he finds a birch-rod instead of sweet-meats in the stocking.

One favorite Christmas sport very generally played on Christmas Eve is "Snap dragon." A quantity of raisins, preserved cherries and candied figs are deposited in a broad and shallow bowl, and brandy is poured over the fruit and set on fire.

The bystanders now endeavor, by turns, to grasp a raisin, fig or cherry, by plunging their hands through the flames; and as this requires both courage and rapidity of action, a considerable amount of merriment is evoked.

The holly and mistletoe find their place an important one in Christmas decorations.

The introduction of the mistletoe bough in the Christmas festival brings in the superstition that the maid kissed under the mistletoe will be married within a year.

It is generally suspended with much secrecy, either from the centre of a room or over a door, and the ceremony is not duly performed unless a berry is plucked off with each kiss, the berry to be presented to the maiden for good luck.

Another pleasant custom of the holiday is the "Wassail bowl." The bowl should be filled with a rich wine, highly spiced and sweetened, with small roasted apples floating on the surface.

Sometimes cider, mingled with ginger, nutmeg, sugar and nuts, is substituted for the wine, but the roasted apples must never be forgotten.

The decoration of a Christmas tree may be as elaborate as one's taste approves or means admit. Many wealthy people make this decoration a work of art, lighting the tree with many electric lights, and with a fountain, and many other charming and original designs. While this display doubtless gives pleasure to many, it is doubtful if it gives any more enjoyment than does the "old fashioned" Christmas tree, with its garlands of pop corn, its paper roses and gay little boxes filled with candies; and the oranges hanging in white net bags.

Then, too, the gingerbread elephants, and the cotton flannel lambs, that are seen gaily perched on the end of many of the branches! Surely no electrical display can equal these charms to the eyes of most children.

The January Number of COMFORT will contain many new and original features, which will be improved and enlarged upon from month to month all through the year of '93. If you subscribe, renew or extend your subscription this month, you will secure all of the good things for only two cents per month. Certainly all can afford to take COMFORT to the tune of that amount. Send 25 cents now.

CHRISTMAS CANDIES.

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WITH the many suggestions that the Christmas season always brings, one of the important ones is how to provide sweets for the children, and perhaps for some of the older members of the family.

At Christmas-tide the small boy's or girl's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of candy, and the important part of it is that the confections be as harmless as possible.

Then, too, the making of candy is not without its charms, particularly if the day chosen for the work be a dull, stormy one, and the kitchen be moderately pleasant

The best peppermints can be easily made. Two large cups of coffee-crushed sugar, a half cup of boiling water; boil hard seven minutes without stirring, then take off the fire and stir in a half teaspoonful of oil of peppermint. Beat to a cream with a silver spoon, and drop on to paper. Nothing could be easier or more successful.

Then there is the old-fashioned molasses candy that no one need be told how to make; and chocolate creams that are almost as simply made, for the chocolates take one cup of powdered sugar, a quarter of a cup of cold water; beat water and sugar together about a minute, then put on the stove. Be sure not to stir it when on the stove; let it boil five minutes, take it off and let the saucepan stand in cold water, and stir until it becomes creamy; make it into little balls and dip them into melted chocolate, dissolved by setting a dish of grated chocolate in hot water.



Another candy that is easy to make is sugared or creamed walnuts. Crack the nuts as carefully as possible, then to two cups of sugar add one-half cup of water; let it boil about three minutes, then add one-half teaspoonful of cream tartar dissolved in a little cold water, and a small piece of butter, let it cook about two minutes. Have your nuts spread in a buttered tin and turn the candy over them, let it set in a cool place and cut in small squares.

These candies can be relied upon, and are surely less harmful than most of the package candies that are sold in quantities at this season.

Corn-balls, too, are a part of the Christmas merry-making, and besides the fun of making them they are much better than any that can be purchased. After a sufficient quantity of corn is popped, take two cups of sugar, add one-half cup of water and let it come to a boil, then turn it over the popped corn and roll up the balls into shape.

Corn-balls, too, are in demand for decorating the Christmas-tree, and the making of them will furnish amusement for some dull afternoon or evening, when the fire in the grate or in the range is just right for corn-popping.

WORLD'S FAIR ITEMS.

The State of Pennsylvania alone will send 150,000 mounted butterflies to the insect exhibit at the World's Fair.

The grounds of the World's Fair are a mile and a half in length, and cover 633 acres. In the erection of the Exposition Buildings it is estimated that over 75,000,000 feet of lumber are required.

They are now building in Spain exact duplicates of the three vessels commanded by Columbus at the time he discovered America. These vessels will come to America next spring. The voyage will be made exactly as Columbus made it, with the same number of men and the same costumes.

Thirty-six hundred children, dressed in red, white and blue, formed two immense American flags, stars, stripes and all, and were seated upon two inclined stands on the route of the Chicago parade. When the Vice-president of the U. S. appeared the two American flags stood up and sang "Columbia" and the "Star Spangled Banner."

During the Chicago Fair Inauguration ceremonies the postmaster of the city was astonished to receive a visit from a man ninety years of age, clad in buckskin, who walked into his office and dropped a leather knapsack and pouch at his feet. Sixty-seven years ago this old gentleman, Alexander Clermont, used to carry the mails once a month on foot 232 miles of unbroken forest from Chicago to a town in Wisconsin. Being still strong and hearty, this veteran conceived the idea of walking over the old route, in his original costume, which was handsomely beaded and decorated by the Indians who in 1830 were numerous. The old veteran met with a hearty reception at the post-office.

FACTS FOR FARMERS.

The Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University considers the matter of good roads of such importance that a professor has been engaged to teach exclusively the art of proper road construction.

If half the study and energy with which the railroads of the country have been pushed forward should be applied to the highways, their present condition would be speedily revolutionized in a few years. And it is a change which would benefit all.

Electrical engineers are making a novel experiment in Illinois. They have located a waterwheel and a dynamo on the banks of a stream and have run the electric wires along the highways, covering in this manner quite a district. This feed wire can be tapped at every farm, furnishing power to run all kinds of farm and household machinery and also all necessary light. A neighborhood may procure traction wagons which will draw their power from the overhead wire upon the road, and ordinary farm wagons may be hitched on, train-fashion, and sent to town. This scheme for furnishing power to farmers seems economical and practical and the progress of the experiment will be watched with interest. As to the simple generating machinery—the waterwheel and dynamo—it almost runs itself. Some farmer's boy, living near, would quickly learn to manage it, and it would require but a small portion of his time at that.

"Comfort's" Christmas Box.

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Chats with Aunt Minerva AND HER OWLS.



EDITOR'S NOTE. The following rules govern the publication of all matter in this department.

Contributors must without exception be regular subscribers to Comfort, and every contribution must bear the writer's own name and post office address in full.

Original letters only, which deal with matters of general interest will be published. They must be as brief, plain and correct as the writers can make them and may vary in length from one hundred to four hundred words. Only letters of exceptional merit and interest may exceed the latter limit. Contributors must write on one side of their paper only.

Every month a number of prize monograms composed of the writer's initials, will be awarded to those sending the best contributions. These monograms, which will be most desirable ornaments for stationery, cards, etc., will be printed in connection with the respective letters, and new electrotypes of same will be mailed, post paid, to the prize winners.

All communications must be addressed to Aunt Minerva, care of COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

DECEMBER PRIZE WINNERS.

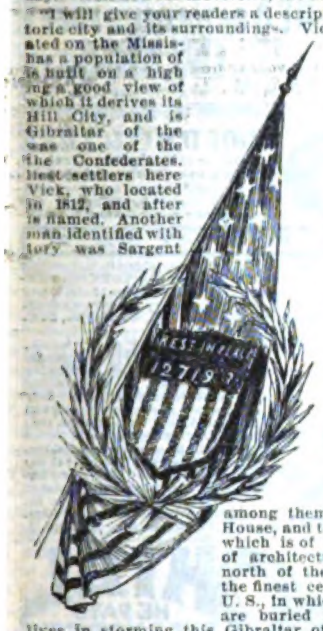
Robert S. Virtue, Jessamine S. Slaughter,
Linda Belle Roath, Harry M. Summers,
J. W. Bothern.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

Once more the blessed Christmas season is upon us, bringing a ray of sunshine across the dull old earth. Christmas does not mean to us what it used to in the careless days of our childhood. Then it was a time of joyous mystery, when we searched slyly for the fascinating and mysterious bundles we had seen smuggled into the house, when we counted the days until the long looked for morning should arrive, when we could hardly wait for the day to dawn, that we might go down and look in our stockings. Our one thought was, "What will Santa Claus bring me?" It was to us a day of *receiving*, and in that its pleasure lay.

But that thought has mostly passed away; to us now the day has a more beautiful meaning, that of *giving*, and we find our happiness in preparing gifts for those whom we love, and for the poor, *in His Name*. Let the children learn this lesson as early as possible; teach the little fingers to fashion simple gifts, crude though their efforts may be, for papa and mama, for brother and sister; and let them help in carrying Christmas joy to the poor. And thus, even in childhood, will they catch the true spirit of the day. Well now for the letters, the first is from Miss.

"I will give your readers a description of this historic city and its surroundings. Vicksburg is situated on the Mississippi river, and has a population of about 20,000. It is built on a high bluff, affording a good view of the river, from which it derives its name, of the country. Vicksburg is also called the Hill City, and is also called the Gibraltar of the South, as it was one of the strongholds of the Confederates. Among the earliest settlers here was Newet Vick, who located in this county in 1812, and after whom the city is named. Another prominent man identified with its early history was Sargent S. Prentiss of Portland, Me., who came here in 1832, and was one of the foremost lawyers of his day. In 1835 he represented Vicksburg in the state legislature. He was in every respect a wonderful orator. Vicksburg has many fine buildings; chief among them is the Custom House, and the Court House, which is of the Ionic order of architecture. One mile north of the city is one of the finest cemeteries in the U. S., in which 16,618 soldiers are buried who lost their lives in storming this Gibraltar of the South. Of this number, 12,719 are unknown. Here is a masterpiece of landscape engineering, and the imposing entrance arch, the verdant heights, and wondrous dells, form a grand memorial to those who died for the Union.



I. R. LOWENTHAL, Jr.,
222 Washington St., Vicksburg, Miss."

"Have any of the cousins ever seen a burning mountain? not a forest fire burning along a mountain top, but a mountain that has a fire within. I saw one near Tamaqua, Penn., which has been burning for 50 years, and may burn as many more; it is underlaid and seamed with coal. On a damp day, and after a rain, clouds of steam may be seen rising along the mountain.



One day my friend Ben and I started to explore the Burning Mountain, and met with an experience which we did not bargain for. We followed a road nearly to the foot of it, then started to climb up the side. Sometimes it was easy walking, and then again we would plunge through underbrush and tangled vines, slipping and sliding over the rocks and stones hidden beneath, grasping limbs and bushes to pull ourselves up. Occasionally these would break, and back we would slide and tumble, digging our heels and fingers in the soil to prevent sliding to the bottom and breaking our necks. Often I would "boost" Ben to a rock above, and then he would pull me up. And thus we made progress, at the expense of our shoes and clothes, of which we thought very little at the time.

When nearly up, we saw a large vein of coal cropping out at the surface, several feet thick; we could follow it for 200 feet.

At last we reached the top, and began to look for signs of the fires smouldering beneath us. A few steps more, and we beheld a curious scene. Before us lay a large open space, surrounded by dead and dying trees, their dried leaves and bare limbs rustling and groaning in the breeze, and looking so mournful. There were no signs of vegetation, not even grass, on this spot. The surface of the ground was covered with rocks and stones of a burnt gray color. Picking some of these up, we found they were warm, and the ground underneath them was warm and slightly moist. Out of cracks and crevices in the ground, there issued little jets and clouds of vapor; these contained noxious gases, and would almost suffocate one if breathed in. Here evidently the fire was burning close to the surface.

Beyond us we noticed a depression, from which issued a large cloud of steam and vapor. Ben walked to the edge of the hole, which was about 4 feet deep, and looked down; but he jumped back quickly, for there, coiled around the steam-hole, as if to be warm, was a large black snake. We both ran for stones, and gave him a volley. One of the stones struck him, and jammed his head into the soft earth. I had a long piece of twine in my pocket, and made a slip knot in it. In the meantime, Ben got the snake by the tail to pull him out. He pulled, but the snake did not come, only about an inch of his tail, which broke off in Ben's fingers. A second time we pulled, and another piece of his tail broke off. I then dropped the slip noose half way down the snake's body, and pulled, while Ben stood ready to kill it when it came out. That snake stretched like rubber, but at last I got him out; he was thoroughly mad, and his eyes shot fire, while his tongue played in and out. He made a spring at me, but I kept far enough away from him, and after quite a fight, we killed him, and hung him from a branch as a warning to others. He was a big one, 4 feet long, and of a kind said to be very poisonous.

We did not stay here very long, for we were now walking over a volcano which might cave in and bury us in hot coals, and it was too risky to make a long stay. Some surveyors, while surveying across the mountain, were digging post-holes, when they came upon hot coals, and some of the holes caved in. The men picked up their spades and fled without stopping to investigate further, and dug their post-holes a good distance off afterwards.

ROBERT S. VIRTUE, 295 Bank St., Newark, N. J."

"I am a newcomer among you, and should like to 'start off on the right foot,' if I only knew how. However, I will give you, as a starter, a sketch of a Mississippi river trip on the steamer Sidney.

There was a good supply of water in the river, so we glided along gently over the sand-bars, and did not hit bottom more than a dozen times between St. Louis and St. Paul. Among the passengers were a couple of ministers on a vacation, a professor, a goodly number of schoolma'ams and summer girls, a few Southern gentlemen, and a big Hat Gaskins sort of a chap with a flaming Alliance badge pinned on his preface.

As a class, the people that travel by boat seem to be easy-going, don't-care-a-continental sort, who have plenty of time at their disposal, and are trying to dispose of it as easily and gently as possible. The summer girl, of course, is always as frisky and gentle as a spring lambkin, and on a steamer she is in her glory.

I had carefully looked over the outfit of maiden passengers, and selected the one I should rescue if the boat should split on a rock or go up in flames. In my dreams I felt inwardly hopeful that the catastrophe would occur, because I would enjoy the pleasure of wading ashore with her sitting on a plank and floating by my side!



One night the darkey minstrels tuned their lyres and executed a few thrilling fantasias; then another fellow and myself hustled around to get up a set and have a little rigadoon. We found 21 girls that wanted to dance, and only 3 boys, and 2 of these declined to join in the first dance because, they said, they felt a little awkward. We were about to give it up as a bad job, when a summer girl from Keokuk came down and asked what was the matter. I explained the case, casually remarking that they were the poorest set of men I ever saw on a boat.

'That's right,' said she emphatically, 'they haven't as much sand as spring chickens. Just let them go, I'll play man for once, and we'll dance anyway.'

And so we did. The minstrels whooped it up in good shape, and the other men stood around with their hands in their pockets and wished they were in it.

The scenery along the river is gorgeous. The air is cool and delicious, and everything seems calculated to make a fellow feel as though he could hug his dearest enemy with great pleasure. The boat stopped at all the largest places, several hours, and everybody took in the sights. The captain was a jolly, good-natured man who wouldn't leave a person if he had to wait an hour.



Many things more I might tell, but not to bore you, I will say good-bye!

HARRY M. SUMMERS,
Keytesville, Mo."

"We live in what was once a part of the 'Old Dominion,' but now constitutes the little mountain State of West Virginia. This county, named in honor of Louis Wetzel, the famous Indian fighter, lies south of the Pan-Handle on the Ohio river. Farming is the chief interest, but the mineral wealth of the State is great, as is also its lumbering interest. Petroleum is found in large quantities in many parts of the State, and is creating considerable excitement in some sections. West Virginia has one of the best free school systems in the country, and in the race for educational honors, bids fair to outstrip the older and wealthier States.

J. F. Hale's article on the nose forms quite a study, and a valuable one too. Oh, that the human family would arouse to a sense of the danger which issues forth to many of them from bottles and glasses, and forever and eternally banish from the vision of mankind such a picture as is truthfully portrayed in No. 6 of Mr. Hale's sketches!

LEWIS E. LANTZ, Lot, W. Virginia."

"I fully agree with the Simple Cynic about love; the truest and noblest natures appreciate love for all it is worth. Of course, man, the great lord of creation, who oft'times goes forth with a carmine nose, was made first; then came woman, but they say second thoughts are best. Man is the head, wants to be the head, and should be the head; if God had not meant it so, He would have taken a bone from Adam's leg to make Eve, then man would have to lean on woman. No, He took a rib from man's side, that the two may walk equal, side by side, through life. Some think that theory of Darwin's, that man was descended from an ape a deep and bitter degradation. But I would rather consider my father an ape, than see him lying in the gutter, a drunken man! Will God know him when he has laid down his soul on the altar of the devil—the devil of gluttony and intemperance? No generous emotion can live within him—no high and holy love can move that degraded heart. Behold the man, 'made in the image of God,' as he reels forth from the saloon, pouring forth blasphemy against Heaven!

Your nephew, CHARLIE HANFORD,
Jacksonville, Fla."

"May I come again and say a few words about this beautiful State? We never have any rain here except in the months of Jan., Feb., and Dec., these being the winter months of Calif. In the summer everything is very dry, and has to be irrigated; and the irrigating systems of the State are fast becoming a nuisance. The water has all been gobbled up by speculators, until the farmer finds it almost impossible to get enough for his crops, and that at such enormous prices that it costs almost as much to irrigate as the crops are worth.

Another important feature in this country is mining. There are all kinds of mines, gold, silver, copper and the celebrated Temescal tin mines are only 8 miles from my home. These mines comprise part of a tract of land known as the San Jacobo Estate, which was formerly a Mexican land grant. Besides tin, there are some very rich gold and silver mines, and a large portion of the land is very valuable for agriculture. The estate is owned by English capitalists, and the majority of the men employed are Cornish; but most of the machinery is of American manufacture. The mines until lately, have not been paying expenses, owing to the amount of hard work which had to be done before the ore could be extracted. But the ore has lately been discovered in a practically pure state, and in large quantities, so that a large amount of pig tin is now being put out. The ore is an oxide, and averages from 40 per cent to 95 per cent tin.

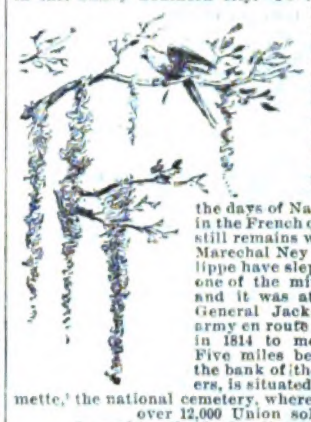
WILL A. WILLIAMS,
South Riverside, Cal."

"How many of the cousins have studied Volapuk? I have studied it considerably, and would advise all to take it up. Instead of reading novels and light literature, devote your spare moments to this study, and you will be surprised at the rapidity with which you will acquire it. Already thousands of people in the Old World use it as an every day language, and it has been introduced into several of the public schools of the U. S. Think of the immense amount of time and money that might be saved by the use of this universal language.

I live near Rutland, the chief centre of the marble trade of Vermont. Do you know, cousins, that Vermont produces more and better marble than almost any other country in the world? A few miles north of Rutland are numerous marble quarries. Some of them are several hundred feet deep, and the workmen at the bottom look like dolls to one looking down upon them. All this land, which could not now be bought for a good many millions of dollars, was once sold for an old horse worth about fifty or seventy-five dollars.

GUY B. HORTON,
North Clarendon, Vt."

"New Orleans was founded in 1718 by Jean Baptiste de Bienville, a French Canadian. At present the population numbers about 240,000, one-half consisting of French and Spanish Creoles, both the French and Spanish languages being spoken as much as English. N. O. is as unique as the Spanish moss that hangs so gracefully from her great live oak and cypress trees. Many and interesting are the sights in this Sunny Southern city. To the stranger the French Market is a decided curiosity, passing on we come to the old Saint Louis Cathedral, the oldest cathedral in the city; the old Place D'Armes where the French forefathers were wont to rally in the days of Napoleon I. Down in the French quarter the house still remains where Lafayette, Marechal Ney and Louis Phillippe have slept. Here is also one of the mints of the U. S., and it was at the mint that General Jackson viewed his army en route for Fort Charles in 1814 to meet the British. Five miles below the city on the bank of the Father of Waters, is situated beautiful 'Chalmette,' the national cemetery, where amid the roses over 12,000 Union soldiers lie awaiting the final roll call. New Orleans is a great cotton and sugar mart and in the fall and winter the levees are alive with drays and negroes loading and unloading cotton from the steamers. There are seventy-five hospitals, infirmaries, asylums, and convents. Thirteen churches, twelve public buildings, and eight public squares. February, March and April is the season for magnolias, roses and many other beautiful flowers that grow here in profusion. It is at this season of the year the celebrated Mardi Gras takes place and visitors coming here from all parts of the country find plenty of enjoyment, under this, the Italian sky of America.





I fear I am making my letter too long, so will step aside and let another cousin in.

LOLA BELLE ROATH, New Orleans, La."

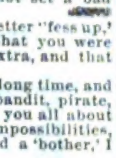
"I haven't time to stay a minute, but I just want to say a word to the boys. I tell you, boys, I, for one, don't think it one bit smart or 'cute' in you to be always telling how no-account you think we girls are. We know you don't mean it, and even if you did, you need not think you can convert any of us. Now there's Cousin Leet says he can make bread and coffee—yes, and jack-rabbit pie. All that is necessary, of course. Some men think that women are only fit for such things. And then he says girls are 'so fickle.' W. W. B., this is your fault; you started all this. You made yourself so popular by the letters you wrote, that all the other fellows thought they would join in and share your popularity. You, who are trying to do so much good, should not set a bad example!

Now, boys, this won't do. You had better "fess up," as the darkeys say, and acknowledge that you were just trying to do something a little extra, and that you don't mean a word you say.

I have been wanting to write for a long time, and have just wished that I was a cowboy, bandit, pirate, or something awful, so that I could tell you all about it. But as I knew such things were impossibilities, for I am only a girl, a 'nuisance,' and a 'bother,' I had to say my say anyway.

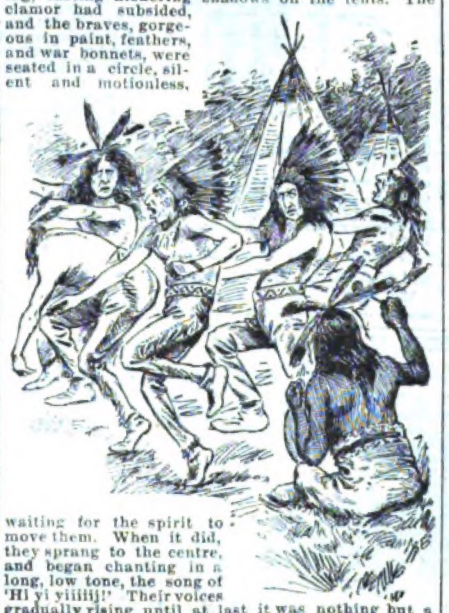
MARGUERITE STEELE, Monticello, Mo."

"By way of introduction to your circle, I will tell you about a dance to which I had the honor to be invited. The dance was held 'down on the bottom,' so a number of friends and myself rode on horseback down to the river. Presently the sound of war-whoops broke upon our ears. At the same moment, the thoroughbred horses which some of the party were riding, scented the Indians, and with terrified snorts, backed and reared, and refused to go on. So their riders were obliged to return home *nolens volens*. But the rest of us, mounted on Indian ponies who were undisturbed by the clamor, rode on, and presently came in sight of the camp.



Before I go farther, let me explain why this dance was celebrated. It is called the 'grass dance,' and is celebrated by all the Gros Ventre, Arickaree, and Crow Indians, in order to propitiate the Great Spirit, that they may secure an abundance of grass.

We halted at a respectful distance, and watched them. Before each teepee a bright light was burning, casting flickering shadows on the tents. The clamor had subsided, and the braves, gorgeous in paint, feathers, and war bonnets, were seated in a circle, silent and motionless, waiting for the spirit to move them. When it did, they sprang to the centre, and began chanting in a long, low tone, the song of 'Hi yi yiiiiij!' Their voices gradually rising until at last it was nothing but a frenzied yell. They kept time by waving their arms, beating tomtoms, and moving their whole body until



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they were exhausted and droppod out. The squaws and pappooses of course, could not join them, but they kept up a prolonged yelling, and with the dogs barking and howling, and the ponies neighing, it seemed as if pandemonium had broken loose.

After watching them for some time, we started for home. They did not stop their performances because the 'pale faces' had left, but kept up their antics until they supposed they had fully propitiated the gods of the harvest.

JESSAMINE S. SLAUGHTER,
Bismark. N. Dak."

I find among my letters two excellent arguments on the subject of woman's rights, so-called, presenting both sides of the question in a fair manner; and it will be well for us to consider them carefully. With these we will close the discussion of this subject for the present.

Aunt Minerva:—The following words appeared in your interesting paper from a writer, speaking on woman's rights, "Can a woman stand behind the curtain of ignorance, and think it her divinely appointed mission to be a mother and look after the welfare of the kitchen, when her good influence is needed at the ballot box and in the court-room?" Can any woman forget that her good influence is more needed and is more productive of good results in her own home, than it would be at the ballot box or in the court-room?

To every creature, animate and inanimate, God has given a mission, and to most women, though not to all, He has given the divinely appointed mission of being mothers, as well as the means of fulfilling it properly.

The true Christian mother has not the making of laws it is true, but she has a hand in the shaping of a nation, by the proper training of her children, who are to be our future citizens, and preparing them for the exercise of their elective franchise, and no one can deny that a woman's suffrage, offered through a fine group of boys, is more efficient than her single vote would be had she entered the political slough, where she must cease to be woman, wife and mother before she can "take the law in her own hands and enfore it."

If the laws are lax, certainly it is deplorable, but evils exist even in the best of governments, and ours is one of the very best, and after all men will manage affairs to suit themselves and regard with feelings of pity and contempt the feeble efforts of woman in this direction.

Women may rule, and supremely too, by the old, old fashion of love, in their own homes, where they have a higher work to perform than the cooking of a meal, or looking after the welfare of their kitchen.

All women of whatever age, rank or mental capacity, have a vote to poll in the great election of right and wrong; if they vote for vice, then the great world of men will be bad; if for virtue, they will certainly succeed beyond expectation in the revolution of corruption. Theirs is the vote that counts, the decisive move, let it be upward and Godward forever.

AURELIA.

"I am truly glad you have opened your columns to a free discussion of a subject so full of vital interest to the oppressed of our land, and I am glad that Clara Stevenson speaks so plainly and sensibly. As long as woman is held amenable to the laws of the land, it is but just that she should have a say in making those laws.

I don't think any harm will come from a full and enlightened discussion of the subject of woman's rights. Let any one contemplate the shame, degradation sorrow and wretchedness that come to wives, mothers and daughters to-day, and think of the utter impossibility of redress or relief under existing laws, and it seems to me there will be a yearning to have matters adjusted upon an equitable basis. Some one in a recent convention has given expression to a sentiment that I hope will become a watchword and battle cry until these wrongs are righted. Here it is: 'We demand for women in shops equal pay, and at the polls with men equal say.'

When this is accomplished do you think pure, innocent girls of ten and twelve summers will be left unprotected and the victims of the uncontrolled passions of brutal men? Do you think that mothers who went down to the gates of death to give life to their sons, will license and protect gin-mills to destroy the bodies and souls of these sons?

Woman is a moral being as well as man, and often her sensibilities are keener and more refined than man's, and possessing as she does quick perceptive powers, and intuitive conceptions of the right, it seems to me that the civil and moral code of our land will receive a wonderful uplift when woman comes to have an equal say with man at the polls.

GEORGE'S WIFE.

"The daily stage coach running from Cave City to Mammoth Cave, Ky., takes the passenger through a desolate country. The occasional huts of the negroes, about the size of a large packing box, with no windows and a piece of stove-pipe through the roof to serve as a chimney, make the scene even more dull and unattractive.



The passing of the stage-coach is an event in the dull lives of the occupants of these huts, and in every door is a little group gazing out. As our coach rattled along one picturesque group at tracted my attention. A negress stood in the doorway wearing a red turban and a red flannel skirt. On each side clung a pickaninny, black as ebony, while a roaring fire of pine logs formed a background which completed a picture worthy of an artist's brush.

On the day of my trip to the cave there was but one other passenger, and we did not reach the Cave Hotel until an hour after dark. We had just finished supper when an old negro guide came in and asked if we wanted to visit the cave that night. This we decided to do. The entrance to the cave is about 150 feet back of the hotel, in a hill which rises to a height of about 120 feet. The entrance itself is about 30 feet high and 20 feet across; and is guarded by large iron gates, which are kept securely locked except when opened by the guides to take tourists in or out. These guides are instructed to carefully count their party both on entering and returning, so that in case any one is missing prompt search may be made.

The temperature of the cave always remains 54 degrees Fahrenheit. My visit was in February, on a cold night, and as we entered the gates there was a strong rush of warm air. The guide told us to hold our lanterns in front of us and make a rush through the entrance to prevent their being extinguished. When we stopped at his bidding, we were well into the cave, and looking up saw an immense number of bats, which congregate here yearly to hibernate in the warm, even atmosphere.



The cave proper extends about four miles into the hill, varying from 30 to 120 feet in height, and from 35 to 300 feet in breadth. Running out on each side of the main passage are other passages which have already been explored for a distance of 75 miles, and much territory of this immense cave still remains unknown.

All about us were beautiful formations of limestone, some small and spherical, as in the 'Snow-ball Room,' whose walls look as if a crowd of school-boys had indulged in a frolic by throwing snow-balls at the ceiling. In the other rooms the limestone formations were of irregular size and shape, and in the 'Smoke House' very little imagination was necessary to see large numbers of hams, shoulders and pieces of beef. Most of them, however, were shaped like icicles that were constantly growing larger, as each drop of the water that incessantly trickles down from the ceiling bears with it a grain of the soft limestone, that serves to build the stalactites and stalagmites that, in some cases, have met and formed grand and stately columns.

There seemed, however, a lack of brilliancy to these formations. The 'Giant's Coffin,' a huge formation 30 feet long and 7 feet wide, is so perfect in shape that it seems as if it must have been carved by the hand of man.

Our guide had provided himself with a knapsack containing pieces of paper soaked in coal oil, and leading us to one side of a room, bade us look through a sort of window from which, he said, we could see the 'Bottomless Pit.' Lighting some of the paper he threw it into a cleft in the rock, the dark sides of which were brilliantly illuminated by the glare, that running along the sides of the chasm, sank deeper and deeper until the light disappeared in a horrible gulf below.

The 'Star Chamber,' a circular room of immense size, is one of the most picturesque and beautiful sights of the cave. The ceiling, of a dark color, is almost covered with small crystals so that one could imagine they were gazing into the starlight vault of the blue sky.

There is a feeling of relief, after all, in coming out of these wonderful passageways, with their curious formations and intense darkness. And we returned to our hotel thoroughly satisfied not to attempt any new explorations in Mammoth Cave.

J. W. BOTHERN, Jersey City, N. J."

With kindest wishes for all, your affectionate
AUNT MINERVA.

An Unlooked-for Visitor.

A SCHOOL teacher in Pennsylvania heard a great rumpus outside the school-house, and found that a fox had caught a goose. The other geese had boldly attacked him. The schoolmarm shouted, and the fox, still hanging to the goose, bolted into the school-house. She followed him and shut the door. The pupils pelted him with books and slates until the fox dropped his prize and began scampering around over chairs and desks. The scholars yelled and the fox jumped upon a counter, smashed a window and poked his nose through a pane of glass. The teacher grabbed him by the tail and pulled him back. The boys were all trying to get a whack at him, so, badly frightened, he dove into an old-fashioned wood stove in which there was no fire. The school teacher slammed the door, thinking she had secured him, but in doing so the stove-pipe tumbled down and out popped the fox through the pipe hole, black as a chimney sweep. He made a break for the window but was driven away, and after getting into various odd corners fled nimbly up a ladder into the garret. A neighbor was summoned, and he lifted his hound up into the attic and set him upon the fox. There arose a terrible racket and then down through the hole fell the dog and the fox. The fox dusted out of the door, with the hound close after him. When they got out into the middle of the next field the fox turned round, fairly thrashed the dog and then limped into the woods and got away.



He Saved Four Hundred Lives.

DURING a cyclone at Samoa, three years ago, the United States vessels were wrecked. The executive officer of the flagship, after all the sails had been stripped from the spars by the wind, called for volunteers to go into the shrouds and form a sail of their bodies, to save the vessel from going broadside upon a reef. Ensign Jackson bravely led the crews into the rigging, and this human sail kept the vessel off the rocks for six hours, by which time they were able to reach the shore in safety, saving the entire crew, four hundred souls in all. On account of there being no vacancy in the service Ensign Jackson was honorably discharged soon afterwards, with a year's pay. Two United States Senators, from whose State Jackson had been appointed to Annapolis, were proud of his courage and introduced a bill, which passed both houses, creating an addition to the number of Ensigns allowed by law and appointing Jackson to the vacancy. So he is now a full-fledged naval officer, and in addition has the distinction held by only two or three naval officers now living, of the privilege of the floor of both branches of Congress, by reason of his name being commended by legislative action.



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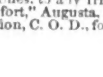
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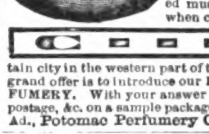
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"COMFORT" has at last succeeded in getting an article from Berlin that **millions** will want, but as only one thousand came along first, we are going to give away one to **every subscriber** who sends in a club of six more yearly subscribers at 25 cents each. It will take less than half an hour to secure this beautiful all Brass Telescope in this way, and you can sell it for several dollars. They have sold as high as $5 or $10. **We do not sell any.** Want to introduce "COMFORT" into another million homes, so take this short cut to do it and give you the profit. It will make a grand holiday present, and so will "COMFORT," if you want to send our improved magazine, with its new stories and depart nents that are up with the times, to any friends for a year. Send six subscribers to-day, and **we pay all charges** on Telescope. You get it absolutely **FREE.** Offer only open while this thousand lasts, and that certainly will not be long. Address the Publisher of "Comfort," Augusta, Maine.

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ABOUT GLOVES.

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QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GLOVE.

GLOVES have in these days no symbolism or associations, yet they once protected the business of the merchant and pedler, for they were looked upon as a general pledge of security. The *word* glove, is said to be the Belgic *gheloove*, meaning faithfulness. There is no doubt as to their antiquity. Xenophon complained of the unwonted luxury of the Persians, saying: "It is not sufficient for them to clothe their heads, and their bodies, and their feet, but they have coverings made for their hands and fingers."

The use of gloves prevailed among the Romans, but not without opposition from the philosophers. Denunciation, however, had as little effect in stemming the tide of fashion then as now, and custom and comfort combining to recommend gloves, their use became general.



KING HENRY VIII GLOVE.

They were first introduced in England in the reign of Henry VIII; though they had long been the fashion on the continent. In Queen Elizabeth's time they were adorned with numbers of precious stones and with embroideries; were highly perfumed, and in many instances, made to reach the elbow.

Of the materials employed in glove making there is a very decided limit. For centuries after their introduction they were made only of skins. Gloves of cloth and knitted from thread of cotton and silk are but little in demand. Kid are the best, but are more rarely met with than most people would credit. The majority of gloves sold as kid are made from lamb skin.

Kid-skins are nevertheless largely used, the kids being raised in several European countries to the great benefit of the peasantry. These kids are not allowed to roam at will, where they might injure their precious skins by pushing through prickly hedges, or rubbing against rocks and doorways, but are kept carefully confined under a coop. Here they are fed with milk only, for fear that a coarser food would give a corresponding quality to the skin.



GLOVE OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

A sense of the value of kid skins in ministering to the needs of fashion, led an enthusiastic individual some time ago to make a proposal to a New York millionaire, that they should unite in buying up all the goats in the world and so establish a monopoly of kid leather.

As a curiosity in commerce, gloves have been produced from spider silk by M. Bon, a French naturalist, who in the beginning of the 18th century created a commotion in the scientific world by claiming the spider as a successful rival to the silkworm. Since, however, it took six hundred thousand spiders to produce one pound of silk, and every spider of them would eat as many other spiders as they could capture, there is little hope of such fabrics coming into general use.

For centuries all gloves were made by hand, but now they are produced by automatic machinery, except one minor point, known as "felling the slit-welt"—that is, the turning over and hemming the welt on the edge of the opening of the gloves.

England and France have large manufactories, but America produces gloves as elegant in workmanship and as desirable in quality as those of London or Paris. Gloversville, New York, is one of the centres of the industry in this country. Not only are gloves manufactured here in large quantities, but a special order for a small number receives equal attention.

It is a popular idea that one can purchase gloves in London at cheaper rates than in our American cities, and every traveler is laden with commissions of careful and economical friends, but comparison shows that what can be bought cheap in London is equally cheap in New York, if real value and personal trouble be taken in consideration.

THE YELLOW FLAG.

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DURING the past fall the word "quarantine" has been in everybody's mouth, and yet it is doubtful if the doctors themselves knew that it only meant "40" or at most "40 days," having come into English from the Latin by way of the Italian language.

In the olden days ships infected with contagious diseases were isolated from the shore for 40 days and that period was called a quarantine.

The word has outgrown that first simple meaning and now officials and even government dispute as to its legal significance.

When the cholera was raging in Europe and thousands were dying every day from the terrible disease, President Harrison proclaimed a 20-day quarantine against all emigrant-bearing ships hailing from infected ports.

In the great harbors, like those of Boston and New York, all the quarantine machinery of the government, the State and the city were put in operation to prevent the entrance of the "coma bacillus," as the scientists call the germs which carry Asiatic cholera.

At the entrance of the harbor a quarantine ground was marked off with yellow buoys. Here every foreign vessel was ordered to come to anchor. As soon as a strange ship appeared the quarantine boat, a swift little steamer with the yellow flag at her stern, would steam out to put the port physician aboard. The doctor would at once order the yellow flag run up to the mast head and until it was ordered down the vessel, her passengers and cargo were in quarantine.

The doctor's next duty was to find if there was any sickness aboard, and if cholera was found the patients were usually transfered to some island used as a harbor hospital.

If there were emigrants they were also taken off to an island to be disinfected. Their clothes and baggage would be put in a big chest and subjected to super-heated steam until all the germs of disease were dead. The immigrants, men, women and children, were taken to a bath house and given a thorough scrubbing. The hold of the vessel itself would be disinfected with the fumes of sulphur burned in great iron kettles.

Though the President's proclamation was not strictly enforced in all cases, a number of emigrant ships were detained for one or two weeks. That was a trying time for the healthy passengers.

They would then organize themselves into a body politic, elect officers, make speeches expressing their indignation and pass resolutions condemning the authorities for refusing to let them land. At other times they would fish over the vessel's side, or get up games and friendly contests.

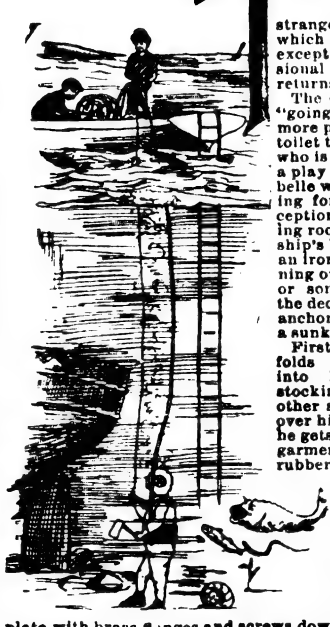
The emigrants suffered most from the disinfection of their effects. Their clothes would come out of the process wrinkled and shrunken and sometimes absolutely ruined. Shoes that were new in London would come out of the steam both curled up into a solid, shapeless mass of leather. A No. 6 glove would shrink down to an inch in width and one woman's seal skin sacque came out so small that a baby could not have worn it.

A New York importer brought over some bedsteads of burnished brass and bedroom furniture painted a pure white. After being fumigated with sulphur the brass bedsteads were streaked with black and the white furniture was an ivory yellow. He sold the articles as antiques and at from $25 to $100 apiece more than they would otherwise have brought.

The quarantine work is practically over for this season, but with warm weather the danger may return and with it the quarantine.

DOWN! DOWN!! DOWN!!!

Written for COMFORT.



TWENTY fathoms under the sea there is a strange world from which no traveller except the professional diver, ever returns.

The diver who is "going down," takes more pains with his toilet than the actor who is to appear in a play or the society belle who is preparing for a grand reception. His dressing room is an open ship's boat that has an iron ladder running over the stern, or sometimes it is the deck of a scow anchored alongside a sunken wreck.

First the diver folds his trousers into long woolen stockings and draws other stocking legs over his arms. Then he gets into a united garment of four-ply rubber canvas that comes to his shoulders and fits over a copper breast plate.

His assistant clamps the neck of the suit to the breast plate with brass flanges and screws down the clamps until the connection is tight. Then he puts on the diver's feet iron-soled shoes that weigh 10 or even 20 pounds apiece and straps a 60-pound leaden belt around his waist, where a knife and other tools are fastened.

The diver is almost dressed and gets over the side ready to drop into the water. His suit is air and water tight up to the collar that surrounds his neck. The air pump connected with the neat coil of rubber hose is started, the big copper helmet is placed over the metal collar and fastened with a quarter turn.

The helmet is a foot in diameter so that inside of it a man can turn his head in any direction. In front and on the sides are plate glass eyes guarded by brass bars. There is a tube which admits the air from the air pump and a valve at the back which opens wide enough to let the air escape but not enough to allow the water to enter.

The life line is fastened around the diver's waist so that it cannot slip and with it the assistant lowers him carefully over the side. The suit fills with air and like a big porpoise the diver rests for a moment on the surface of the water. Then he disappears and only the bubbles on the surface show where he has been.

Armed with a powerful electric search light he makes his way into the cabins of sunken ships for gold or other valuables. He must carefully retrace his steps following the hose and life line for if they are tangled he is beyond help.

Sometimes his work is to cobble up holes in sunken vessels so that they can be pumped out and raised, sometimes he puts in dynamite charges for blasting or works for years building walls of solid masonry which used to be built with greater danger under the old-fashioned diving bell. He is often employed to search for the bodies of persons who have been drowned.

Diver Beane was wonderfully successful once when he brought up from the bottom of Long Island Sound a valuable diamond ring lost by a member of the Larchmont Yacht Club.

"The fish are not afraid of a diver," said old Dave Smith who was in the business 15 years ago. "Why, the flounders would follow about my heels like chickens and I often caught lobsters and sent them up on my life line. Lobsters crawl forwards but swim the other way. They give two or three flaps with their tails, straighten out and shoot backwards like an arrow."

"A man can work for hours at 15 fathoms but at 20 he can't do much as the pressure of the water is too great. In England they have suits made with steel rings that take the pressure. When I first went into the business we did not have electric lights to take down but used a 50-pound lantern that was supplied with air by means of a separate hose and air pump."

When Vanderbilt's palatial yacht was sunk in Vineyard Sound Diver Sullivan nearly lost his life in the luxurious cabin, for an accidental blow broke the globe of an incandescent lamp, which exploded with so much violence that it cracked one of the glasses of his helmet.

Sullivan also went down to the Steamer Whitney when it was sunk in Boston harbor and found a ragged hole over 25 feet square. He blasted off the rough edges of the iron hull, patched the hole with planks and canvas so that the steamer was pumped out and raised. The case was remarkable because the Whitney was raised with all her cargo on board.

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What About Stuffed Cats?

AND REAL LIVE ONES ALSO.

When we see the dear good cat sitting upon the hearth do we ever stop to think what a great comfort they are to have around the house? Oh my! how overrun we would be with mice and what destruction would follow if the dear old Tabby Cats should all be suddenly taken away, and how much the dear pets would be missed. Why, in some countries homes for homeless cats are endowed with a great deal of money and they used to be embalmed at death so great was the respect and sacredness of the pets. One of the greatest achievements of modern invention and marvels of improved machinery is the turning out of stuffed cats. We do not mean that they are manufactured all stuffed, only all ready to stuff. It was never thought possible to reproduce cats hairs or manufacture cat skins on or from heavy cloth, but really such seems almost to be the case. The ingenuity of man never seems to be brought to a standstill and the latest product is just perfection in cats; they are full life size, 13 inches high produced in colors, being the most perfect representation of a household cat that one can imagine. They come all ready to stuff with cotton (or any waste material) and by simply sewing together you have a cat looking so natural that you or your dog could not tell it from a *real live one*. Tie a ribbon around its neck, set it on the hearth or up to the window and a rare and novel ornament is the result. *The Children?* why, they just go wild over the dear sweet things, it is the most lasting and novel plaything ever invented and they last a lifetime, being like the Dolls advertised in another column *indestructible*. The beauty of it all is that the Publishers of COMFORT are going to give one away to all the little Girls or Boys or Men and Women who will send in one new yearly subscription for 25c., or if you had rather send 15c. for a three months subscription and a cat we send them that way and at the same rate in larger lots as the Dolls advertised on page 6 are sold, or will send part of each if you want to sell around to houses, at church fairs or the like. Many are buying the Dolls 500 at a time and making much money selling them for Holiday presents, and as the Cats are a great improvement over anything yet gotten out they will be sold by the Thousands, as one can be sold at every house and at a good profit. Address Pub. of COMFORT, Augusta, Maine, to-day and make a start for an all winters work canvassing for the best articles you ever saw, being gotten up in this style they can be sent to any part of the country post or express paid by us and when stuffed are *full life size in every way*.

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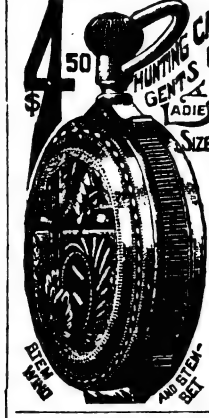
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'Tis better so.
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The cup of tea.
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The pilot.
The poachers.
The watchman.
Twilight dews.
The fisher.
The old maid.
The bridge.
The watermill.
Unspoken.
We, wut, wut.
When I behold.
Ye merry birds.

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THE NUTSHELL STORY CLUB

Under this head are published every month the best original short stories received under the following prize offer and the writers of which have complied with the conditions here named.

Only regular subscribers may compete for the prizes. All contributions must bear the writer's full name and address; must be written on one side of the paper only and be mailed in a sealed envelope, duly stamped, to EDITOR NUTSHELL STORY CLUB, care of COMFORT, AUGUSTA, MAINE.

All stories must be original and contributors may write upon any subject, whether based upon fact, fancy or fiction—of adventure, love, war, peace; of city or country life, or of experiences on land or sea—but no story must contain more than 1200 or less than 800 words. No manuscript will be returned unless an addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed.

The writer of the best original story will receive $20 cash; of the second best, $15 cash; of the third best, $10 cash and of the fourth best, $5 cash.

The prize winners for December are:

Granville Sharpe, $20.00.

Emma Olive Kemp, $15.00.

L. S. Worth, $10.00.

Wm. Wrightman, $5.00.

Pie Crust and Poetry; or, Romance in a Rolling Pin.

BY GRANVILLE SHARPE.

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Mrs. HALIDAY was in a dilemma. She was minus a cook.

Somehow, though the house in which Mrs. Haliday lived was one of the finest in town, and her family one of the best, she was always having trouble with her servants. She had, within the past six weeks, dismissed one, another had given warning and left on the same day, while the third, a ponderous, loud voiced woman, failing to be even so considerate as the other two, had absconded in the night with a set of souvenir spoons!

No wonder the good lady was in despair and hailed with relief a letter from an old acquaintance, to whom she had written her grievances, which said, by way of postscript:

"If you are not yet supplied with a cook, I can send you one who I feel sure will prove satisfactory. She is an American girl, and I can recommend her highly. If you wish her to come, write or telegraph."

Mrs. Haliday had telegraphed, and was now awaiting the arrival of the girl, whom she longed to see, as her wealthy and single aunt, Miss Dorcas Walker, and her only son, who practiced law in a distant city, were both with her, as it happened, and they were both particular to a nicety.

A ring from the door bell interrupted her reflections. She answered it herself. Before her, as she opened the door, stood a young woman in a plain black dress and hat. She was extremely pretty, with soft black hair, sunshiny brown eyes, and a mouth both decided and sweet.

"Does Mrs. Haliday live here?" she asked, rather timidly. "Perhaps I ought not to have come to this door," she added, noting Mrs. Haliday's perplexed look. "I am the—the person whom you engaged as cook."

"Oh yes! The cook!" said Mrs. Haliday, immensely relieved. "What is your name?"

"Fanny Moore."

"Well Fanny, come in. I am glad you have come for I need you badly," said Mrs. Haliday kindly, but the girl stood motionless, her eyes fixed on some object behind that lady with an expression of startled astonishment. Turning around, Mrs. Haliday saw no one but her aunt Dorcas, who also was acting strangely. She was looking directly at the new cook, with an expression of surprise.

After the girl had disappeared under the escort of the chamber-maid, Mrs. Haliday said, laughingly:

"Aunt Dorcas, what sort of a spell did you cast on my new cook? She looked as if she had seen a ghost!"

"Oh! I was merely looking at her, you know; she is so—so pretty," said Aunt Dorcas, a faint color rising in her thin old cheeks.

But from that time the old lady took a great interest in the little cook. Fanny spent many an evening in her private sitting room, while the usually reserved old lady might often be seen chatting with the girl as she went about her tasks in the kitchen.

But with regard to all the rest of the family, Fanny "kept her place" very distinctly. She did it too, in a way that commanded respect, while her skill at cooking formed a staple subject of conversation at meals. The kitchen, too, became a changed place. There were pretty shades at the windows, and an easy chair stood in a convenient corner, giving the room a homelike appearance.

It was not long before Mrs. Haliday's tall, handsome son discovered that they had a remarkable cook. Percy Haliday entered Aunt Dorcas' room one evening, and found Fanny reading Emerson's Essays aloud to the old lady, with a voice and manner which gave evidence that she read with appreciation. She colored with vexation at his entrance, and immediately made an excuse to leave the room.

The young man's curiosity was piqued. To meet with a cook who was at the head of her profession, was beautiful as a dream, who read Emerson and appreciated him, was singular enough, but that she should be so annoyed at being caught at such a pastime was still more curious.

"She is a pretty little country girl with high ideas," he said to himself. "However, it will do no harm to encourage her," and so he bought copies of all the latest magazines and left them, one by one, upon the kitchen table, during her absence from the room. But he found them all upon his study table not long afterward, with the leaves uncut.

Nothing daunted, he took them down to the kitchen, where he found the cook rolling pie-crust. The sleeves of her dark cotton dress were rolled up just above the elbow, revealing two charming dimples; but somehow when he stood before her all his coolness vanished and he said awkwardly:

"Excuse me, Fanny, but I brought these magazines down for you."

"Yes," said Fanny seriously, without looking up, for she was holding the pie platter suspended with one hand, while she carefully cut the overhanging crust with a blunt knife with the other, "but why did you bring them?"

"Well, because I saw you reading Emerson the other day, and so fancied you would appreciate some such reading," said Percy kindly.

"Are you sure it was Emerson? Must have been a cook-book," said Fanny absently.

"It was Emerson; but I am sure you have no need to be ashamed of it," said Percy, laying down the magazines. But he paused, being struck with the beauty of the cook's hands. The tapering fingers, beginning with a dimple at the knuckles and ending with pink, well-kept nails, were different from those of any of the cooks his mother had ever had. Next his gaze wandered up to the well-shaped head, set so proudly on the firm white throat. There was a refinement and sense of good breeding in the atmosphere of that kitchen which impressed him.

That night he dreamed that Fanny, as Cinderella, was driving away in a chariot made of a pie-platter. The next day he made an excuse to the kitchen to get a hammer which he did not need, and this time he found her looking over a French book.

"Do you want to learn French?" he asked. "Perhaps I can help you."

"Very well," said Fanny philosophically handing him the book. "I am very rusty on my French," she added.

"I am afraid I am a little rusty too," acknowledged Percy; and it presently appeared that if any teaching were done he would be the pupil, for Fanny's accent was the more nearly correct, and she spoke with a fluency he could not imitate.

Percy finally put down the book, his face kindling. "Why won't you trust me?" he asked.

"Because I don't like your accent," she answered softly.

"Oh, I don't mean the language; I shall never presume to teach *you* anything again. But—don't be angry—I am honest. I am sincere. You are above the position you are in. I know it would be my mother's pleasure to aid you—to be a friend to you—why won't you confide in her?" he blundered.

Fanny's face grew flushed and serious, though a gleam of fun was in her eyes.

"You are kind—most kind," she said; then struck by a sudden idea, she looked up at him and added, "There is one thing I would like."

"Name it," he said eagerly.

"It is only a little information."

"You shall have it."

"And you will be honest with me?"

"Perfectly."

"Well then," she said with a quick-drawn breath. "is my cooking *perfectly* satisfactory to you in every way?"

"It is, most seriously," said Percy with a struggle to maintain his dignity, which utterly failed, and they simultaneously broke down and laughed.

"This is really a matter of importance to me," went on Fanny, at last. "See what I have been bold enough to write and get your mother to sign!"

Percy took the paper she handed him, and read:

"This is to testify that Fanny Moore has lived in my family for six weeks in the capacity of a cook, that she has faithfully executed all tasks assigned to her, that she has never been disrespectful or impudent, and that as a servant I find her competent and unpresuming."

Percy sat silent for a moment, then wrote a few lines on the opposite page. "This is my testimony," he said, handing it to her, and with a slight bow, left the room.

Fanny took up the paper with trembling fingers, and read as follows:

"I believe in you not only as a faithful cook, but as a good and noble woman whom I love with my whole heart, and wish to marry. Please answer if I may hope. Percy Haliday."

Percy, as he ran blindly up stairs, met a messenger boy, bearing a telegram, It was a call to go to a neighboring town on business. It was three days later when he returned, which he did just in time to join the family at dinner. His father was sipping his after dinner coffee with a wry face. "This is very poor coffee," he said.

"Yes. We have a new cook. She is not as good as Fanny," said his wife.

"Fanny gone! Where did she go?" cried Percy, dropping his knife.

"I do not know, dear, I am sure. How should I know? She simply said she could not stay any longer," said Mrs. Haliday, regarding her son with surprise.

But that evening Aunt Dorcas received a visit from the young man, who frankly confessed his infatuation. Aunt Dorcas beamed on him delightedly.

"I am so glad," she said.

"What do you know about her? Who is she?"

"Oh! I recognized her the moment I saw her," said Aunt Dorcas, giving her nephew a skein of yarn to hold. "Her mother was the daughter of an old friend of mine, and I have visited her."

"But who is *she*?"

"She is Frances Moore Van Dyke, only daughter of the retired banker in Philadelphia. Frances for some time has been greatly interested in social problems, and is the president of a club of young girls who move in her own set, the purpose of which is to better the condition of over-worked, under-paid sewing women and shop girls. To this end, last winter, the Club organized a free cooking school, in the idea that domestic employment for the class of women above named, would be better and more remunerative. The women came—they saw—they learned how to cook, and then the trouble commenced. Their pride forbade them to enter anybody's kitchen as a servant!

"What was to be done?

"The girls talked it over, and the foolish, zealous young things came to this conclusion:

"One of the members of the club must go out, secretly, as a cook in a private family, in order to show her less fortunate, but proud sister-women, that there was really no disgrace in being a cook. A ballot was passed, containing one black ball. Fanny drew it. She therefore obtained the situation with your mother through a lady who thought she was sending a protege of Frances', and came here. You know the rest!"

"She is a noble girl," said Percy with moist eyes. "I knew it all the time."

"Yes," said Aunt Dorcas, deliberately, "she is—not because she is the daughter of the wealthy Mr. Van Dyke, but because she has shown that she can perform faithfully those tasks, without the understanding of which no woman is well educated, and because she considers it an honor to serve!"

"Aunt Dorcas! Do you think there is any chance for me?"

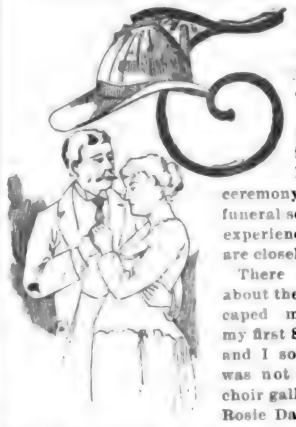
"Well, I don't know," said the old lady with a laugh. "Girls are romantic, you know, and, somehow, taking all things into consideration, I think you'll have success."

Time and after events proved this to be true!

THE DOMINIE'S STORY.

BY EMMA OLIVE KEMP.

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HERE are three things a minister is certain to remember to his dying day. These three things are his first sermon in his own church his first wedding ceremony and his first funeral service, and in my experience these three are closely connected.

There was very little about the church that escaped my attention, on my first Sunday at B—— and I soon saw that all was not harmony in the choir gallery opposite me. Rosie Dare, the postmaster's daughter, was the belle of the town, and her lover, Sam Marsh, was a leader among the young men of the place. They were both in the church choir and their singing was the pride of the town. They sat side by side, as was necessary to the parts they sang, but on that Sunday their eyes never met. As soon as the singing was over Sam retired to a back seat, giving place to a much older but prosperous-looking man, a stranger to me, but evidently no stranger to Rosie.

At the church door she introduced me to John Cooper, the stranger, adding significantly that they would call on me soon. She then took his arm and they walked away homeward together. Among the last to leave was Sam Marsh, who with a smile and a nod went his way all alone.

True to her word Rosie called on me the very next day with John Cooper, and astonished me greatly by saying, with a musical laugh, which I thought rather forced, "We have come to the parson to be married." On the way to my landlady's parlor where the wedding ceremony was to take place, I got an opportunity of speaking to Rosie alone. I asked her what had come between her and Sam, but only got for reply a defiant toss of the head, with the remark that "when she married a man, she wanted one that kept his engagements." I felt that there was a cruel mistake somewhere, but, as Rosie's parents who accompanied her seemed satisfied, I had no alternative but to proceed with my first wedding ceremony. The groom got through it very well, but the bride and I were nervous and ill at ease, and when the momentous words were uttered which bound her to the man whose hand she held, there was a tremor in her voice. She had regained her composure, however, when on leaving she invited me to visit at the house of which she was now the mistress.

From my landlady I learned that John Cooper was a wealthy widower some twenty years Rosie's senior, whose wife had been dead about two years. His only remaining daughter had been recently married leaving her father alone in his large mansion on the outskirts of the town. He had been a suitor for Rosie's hand for some time back, and was favored by her people because of his wealth, but secretly because they couldn't say anything against Sam Marsh. Rosie had always laughed at the widower's attentions, until one day she had a quarrel with Sam and in a moment of pique she had accepted John Cooper and turned her back on her old love.

I went that evening, on Sam Marsh's invitation, to visit the fire company of which he had been recently elected foreman. In my boyhood days I was as ready as anyone to scamper down the street after the fire apparatus, and I haven't gotten over the craze yet, but now I don't run, I walk or ride, as I am somewhat stouter than in those days.

After I had sufficiently admired everything about the engine, the horses and the house, I had a talk with Sam about Rosie. I wanted to comfort him in his loss, especially as I had an uncomfortable sort of feeling that I had a hand in robbing him of her. He told me about their quarrel. One evening when he was leaving his work at the railroad shops where he was master-mechanic, an engine broke down at the depot, necessitating his services, before it could be removed and the track cleared. He had an engagement with Rosie that evening, but he couldn't leave, and he sent a messenger excusing himself. She refused to accept his excuse, and wouldn't receive his visits any longer. He said that he forgave her inconstancy and would congratulate her on her good fortune, for he believed that John Cooper would make her a good husband, able to do better for her than he could at present.

Just as I started to go home, the bell on the town hall began to ring the sharp, quick strokes of the fire alarm and instantly there was bustle and activity in the engine house. The horses, which were but a moment before lazily pawing the floor, lifted their

(Nutshell Stories concluded on page 13.)

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THE NUTSHELL STORY CLUB

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12.)

heads, pricked up their ears, and jumped for their places at the poles, and the men were not behind them in taking their positions on the apparatus. Sam pulled me up beside him on the foot board of the engine as it started out, and he held tight hold of me or I should have been bounced off several times on the way.

Arrived at the fire my heart gave a great jump on finding it to be the Cooper mansion, and Sam was equally affected. Giving a few quick orders to his men, he sprang up to the front entrance of the house, seized an axe, with which he broke in the front door, and groped his way into the building. It was full of a thick smoke so that I was forced to retreat to the open air, gasping for breath while my eyes smarted and ran water.

Meanwhile Sam had made his way upstairs where he soon appeared at a window bearing the apparently inanimate form of Rosie. Willing hands quickly bore her down and into a neighboring house where she was finally brought back to consciousness after hard work. Her husband had been awakened in some manner and groped his way into the hall where he had succumbed to the volume of smoke rushing up the stairs. It was some time before they found him and then it was too late. Nothing could save his life, though everything was done that could be done, and he died. It was my sad duty to tell Rosie that she was a widow on her wedding night.

There was a notable gathering at the funeral of John Cooper for he had been rich and influential, and many were brought together out of curiosity to see the bride of a few short hours.

Rosie was greatly prostrated by her husband's death, and it was many months before she again took her place in the choir. But those weary months had been lightened by the knowledge that the old love on which she had turned her back had not been lost to her.

About a year after that first wedding there was another at the little house which Sam built for Rosie and himself, and I performed the ceremony which made them man and wife.

A DECEMBER PICNIC.

By L. S. Worth.

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"LET'S have a picnic," was the suggestion made by Frank Estabrook one bright summer morning.

Now a December picnic would be a novelty in most parts of the country, but in Colorado Springs, at the foot of Pike's Peak the suggestion was eagerly seized. A group of students of the Western Academy were gathered on the front steps of their boarding club. Some were from the far East and some were natives of the West, but they were all under the spell of the glorious Colorado sunshine.

In an hour they were racing over the mesa toward South Canon. They made quite a procession altogether, for some were horseback, some in dog-carts and the rest brought up in the rear in a four seated mountain wagon, with always room for one more.

Bessie Martin on her little gray pony which she had brought down from her father's ranch from the Upper Fountain, was galloping ahead. Beside her rode Frank Estabrook on a bob-tailed English cob. Frank was from New York and this morning was dressed in perfect form, as if for a turn in Central Park.

Frank Estabrook was always in perfect form, from the top of his blonde head to the tip of his pointed shoes and though his rich father had sent him to the mountains for his health he was always a leader in academy matters.

Yet he was not popular. He had showered his courtesies on all the girls but lately had singled out the big ranchman's daughter for his particular attention. Bessie hardly knew whether she was pleased or not. She would not have been in doubt had not Tom Bailey spent the preceding winter at the academy and said a great many foolish things to her.

But this morning, under the spell of the dazzling sunlight, the rare air and the exciting gallop between the cacti beds, she blushed with pleasure at Estabrook's compliments. Tom Bailey was with his cattle down in New Mexico, and seemed far away. And besides perhaps he would never come back.

After a six mile ride the picnicers plunged into the South Canon and followed the road between bright red and yellow cliffs, until a miniature waterfall checked their progress. Then the party left the horses and like real explorers rambled off among the pines of the mountain side for a place to lunch.

That afternoon Frank and Bessie climbed to the top of a commanding peak and looked off over miles and miles of yellow plains. Then Frank told her that she was his ideal, said that he loved her and asked her to promise to be his wife. His words were gently earnest and fell pleasantly on Bessie's ears, but somehow the thought of Tom came to her.

"No. I can't promise you," she said hesitatingly, but Frank saw that she was touched, and determined that he would abide his time.

There was a suspicious muteness between Bessie and her escort when they started on the homeward journey, and Joe, Bessie's brother, noticed it. He shared the indefinite dislike that was felt for the superior Estabrook, and he had invited Tom Bailey to spend Christmas with him at the Martin ranch. But now he felt that the visit would be too late to do Tom any good.

"The poor fellow will have to spend Christmas," thought Joe, "but I'll have pity on him and take him to Denver the next day. He won't like it, of course, but I can't keep him shut up in the same house with that fickle sister of mine."

Letters travel slowly in New Mexico. It was only a week before Christmas, and Tom Bailey, riding on the La Junta round-up, had not heard a word from Colorado. Postmen do not go following round-up outfits, but in the fall when the beef cattle are gathered in and money is likely to be plenty a wandering peddler sometimes strikes the camp.

Tom and fifteen other cow-boys had been working hard for six weeks but their riding was almost over, for they were camped on the Little Forks only twenty miles from Tequesquite. Old Ransom, the peddler with his white covered wagon, was met with shouts of laughter and rough abuse, but old Ransom had under the white canvas cover a barrel of real whiskey that he had made himself, and there were high old times that night in the La Junta outfit.

"Foxy" Jones, the captain of the round-up, did not allow that the men were tied to his apron strings and if they wanted to play monte and drink whiskey all night instead of going to sleep, it was none of his business. He turned in under the mess wagon as a sensible man should.

Tom Bailey rolled himself in his blankets under the stars but he could not follow the captain's example and sleep. He was not a coward but the wild shouts and wilder songs of the men around the fire filled him with a feeling of foreboding. Finally he lost consciousness in troubled dreams and he seemed to see a fight and hear pistol shots. He did hear pistol shots and he sprung out of his blankets and gazed about him in the early dawn. Most of the cow-boys were sober now and Tom learned what had happened.

Manuel Correjos, one of the Mexican rancheros, had been dealing the monte game, and had lost heavily. When it came his turn to guard the bunched up cattle he had insolently refused to go. He had quarreled with "Foxy" Jones and they had both shot. Manuel lay off by himself, with a broken leg. Nobody bothered about the greaser."

"Foxy" had a bullet hole in his shoulder, but he had angrily ordered the other men to their work and then become insensible. Tom did not stop to hear any more but with three others took the wounded captain from the ground and placed him on the cook's blankets in the mess wagon. Meanwhile the Mexican lay in agony. All the relentless hatred of the man was aroused and in spite of the exquisite pain of his broken limb he dragged himself unnoticed to the mess wagon. When within a few feet of the unconscious captain Manuel took deliberate aim and fired.

With scarcely a shudder, Foxy Jones died. The now enraged cow-boys swung a lariat around the murderer's neck and dragged him at the heels of a horse to the nearest tree, where they hauled him clear of the ground.

Manuel's body was cut down to save the rope, but that was the end of that round-up. The next day Tom Bailey received at the Tequesquite post-office Joe Martin's delayed letter asking him to spend Christmas at the ranch. Tom did not dream that all was not right with Bessie Martin. His only thought was to get North as fast as possible. For five days he rode with the desperation of a lover over the barren plains and through the deep snow and the mountain passes. He rode till he killed his good broncho and then tramped into Diablo with the heavy saddle on his own shoulders. He had been unable to wait for money and from Diablo he must go by rail so he sold his saddle and revolver for enough to pay his fare.

It was dark on Christmas eve when he reached Colorado Springs. Joe Martin, who had heard nothing from him, had disappointedly left for the ranch that afternoon, but Tom met one of the academy boys and borrowed fresh clothes and a nervous buckskin pony. In one of those fierce blizzards that come even in the sunny land he started on his eight mile ride, to the Upper Fountain ranch.

It was phenomenal weather, as Coloradoans say. Less than a foot of snow had fallen but the fierce wind blew it in blinding clouds across the prairie. Tom's pony pattered over bare ground and then floundered in snow filled arroyos or in drifts that rose like walls before him. After two hours of such going Tom felt that he was lost. The fates seemed to be against him for he was tired with excitement and disappointments of the past few days. What though he had left a good herd of a thousand cattle on the New Mexico range? Here he was in a borrowed suit riding a borrowed horse aimlessly over the storm swept plains, where he was likely to perish in the snow.

But he gave his tired beast the reins and urged him forward whither he would go. First it was a wire fence, then a high gate and then a dimly shining light that he brushed the ice from his eyes to see. A man never receives a welcome like that but once in his life.

In the big kitchen he was warmed and dried and fed. Then when he was presentable he was ushered into a large low room, a polished floor covered with skins and Mexican rugs. It was furnished like an Eastern drawing-room, only more comfortably, and filled with a warm glow from the huge wood fire.

Bessie was there and met his look of love with an answering glance that filled him with perfect happiness.

They did not need words then and besides Estabrook and the other guests were around them. But in the good old-fashioned dances that followed, Tom gave a gentle pressure to somebody's hand and Christmas Day he asked for the greatest present in the world and Bessie shyly gave herself.

THE EDUCATED BEAR.

By Wm. Wrightman.

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"EVENING papers; full account of the counterfeit money!" shouted the newsboys. True enough, counterfeit money seemed more abundant than the genuine green backs in this thriving city on the Texas frontier. Few people could detect the good from the bad. What was to be done?

A number of detectives were on the search for the guilty parties, but so cunning were the counterfeiters that their lawless proceedings could not be traced.

A mysterious feature of the case was the sudden disappearance of Captain Sweeny. He had been an officer during the Indian troubles, was an experienced hunter, and of late a public detective.

All sort of rumors were afloat. One of these was that he had been captured by the outlaws, to keep him out of their way. This story was not generally believed, and it was thought that Captain Sweeny had his own good reasons for keeping out of sight during the excitement in regard to the counterfeiters.

Those who were suspicious of the captain were careful not to say much about him, for he was a stout, muscular man, and until his final disappearance was assured no one wanted him for an enemy.

When the bad money was most plentiful a circus came to town. One of its attractions was an educated bear, whose tricks were the admiration of all beholders. Before the circus left town the bear broke loose and escaped. The manager did not concern himself greatly over his loss, owing to the brute's savage disposition, and the bear was now at large in the woods near the town.

One day as Tom Hawkins, a noted gambler, a man of powerful frame and great strength, was walking through the woods on the outskirts of the city, he heard the crackling of bushes, and, before he could turn to see what it was, felt a hairy arm around his neck and a kiss on his cheek.

Tom took in the situation at a glance, and, though for a moment tempted to shoot the beast, decided to keep him. The bear appeared perfectly docile and playful as a kitten.

"Come along, old fellow; you're my bear now," said Tom, as he thrust his arm into the bear's and walked on.

It was not long before they reached a moss-covered and apparently solid ledge. Tom struck the ledge with a stick and gave a series of low whistles, when, behold! like the old Eastern story, a door opened, and in walked Mr. Tom and his newly-found friend.

"What are you going to do with the brute?" asked the man who opened the door.

"Keep him, of course; he's funny as anything," and Tom related his adventure with Master Bruin.

The bear kept close to his new master and looked the room over with an expression of uneasiness and surprise. The apartment was elaborately furnished, and lighted by electricity. The air was pumped in through a small aperture by means of a noiseless machine.

As Bruin got accustomed to his surroundings, he became inquisitive, and his curiosity led him to poke his head under a bed in the further corner of the room, but a huge chest covered with canvas prevented the bear from getting under, so he returned to his first station near the door of the cave.

At nine o'clock that night five men were seated around the extension table in the center of the room. The chest was opened and its contents laid on the table. Yes; it was true these men were the counterfeiters, and this was their den.

After working industriously for three hours at making bogus money, they retired for the night.

Towards morning, as Tom carefully opened the door and stepped out, the bear slid out behind him unnoticed.

Marshal Roberts, the police officer, was reading his paper at the station house at half-past one that night, when who should walk in but Master Bruin. The marshal sprang up and would have shot him, had not the bear leaped forward and given him the most tender embrace a bear could give, and lifting him up, carried him into the adjoining room. The marshal was helpless in the fond embrace of the affectionate bear.

They were in the room about fifteen minutes, then bowing low, the bear rushed from the room out into the darkness.

Next night Master Bruin walked by the station house. He left behind him a white trail which marked his way to the den. Upon entering he did a few tricks to the delight of the men. Tom was proud of his new possession, and calling him asked the bear how much he loved him.

Master Bruin put his strong hairy arm about Tom's neck and hugged him until Tom screamed with pain and the bones in his neck cracked, and then to the frightened men said: "This much."

Just then the door of the den was burst open and in rushed ten stalwart policemen with revolvers in their hands, and the outlaws were prisoners.

"Game's up!" said a voice close to Tom's ear, and turning he confronted his worst enemy with a cocked revolver at his head, who was none other than the lost Captain Sweeny, and at his feet lay the skin of a bear.

Tom took in the situation at a glance and surrendered as gracefully as his stubborn disposition would allow.

After a few days the trial of the outlaws came off, and when Captain Sweeny stood up to give his testimony, he said:

"I was speaking with a gentleman of my acquaintance when I overheard the manager of the circus say that he didn't care for the bear. I came across him the following day and after killing it I kept the skin. Finding a clue to the counterfeiters' place, I donned the bear's skin and met Tom Hawkins, whom I suspected to be one of the gang. Fearing I was followed I acted as near to an educated bear as I could, and while with Marshal Roberts I told him all about it and asked for aid. I scattered flour along so when the policemen came they could follow my trail."

The detective was vigorously applauded. The outlaws were found guilty and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Tom Hawkins was found to be the man who escaped from a Tennessee prison after killing the warden. He was found guilty of the last offence and sentenced to be hung. Captain Sweeney was the hero of the day, but it was his last piece of detective work, and he is now living on his own ranch near the city where he captured the counterfeiters.

CATARRH CURED.

A clergyman, after years of suffering, from that loathsome disease, Catarrh, and vainly trying every known remedy, at last found a prescription which completely cured and saved him from death. Any sufferer from this dreadful disease sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Prof. J. A. Lawrence, 88 Warren St., New York, will receive the receipe free of charge.

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FOUND

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$5,000

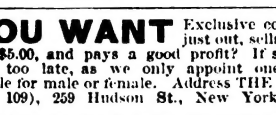
A Boston Baker sold 149 old coins

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If you have any Old Coins or Proofs coined before 1878, save them, as they might be worth a fortune. Illustrated circulars on rare coins free at office or mailed for two stamps. Agents Wanted **NUMISMATIC BANK, Court St., Boston.**



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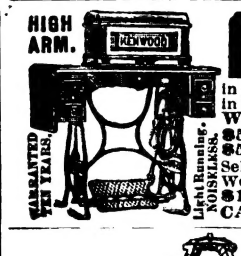
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THIS is a comfortable night within doors. The moon looked big and bright as I gazed at its silvery face early this evening. How curious to think, children, that since we saw it last night the nude people in Africa have seen it; it has shone on the wild jungles of India, lit the snowy roadways of Siberia, blinked at its old friend the Sphynx in Egypt, has made weird faces at the Chinaman as well as the sleepy sailor on the trackless ocean. Great traveler is that moon.

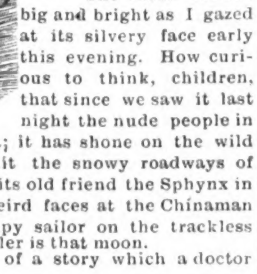
That reminds me of a story which a doctor once told me.

There lived an old man near the base of Mt. Washington. His house was filled with polished animal bones—horses' jaws, bears' teeth, wolves' ribs, moose horns and like parts of creatures which once inhabited the woods. No one ever saw him in daylight, he always kept his doors closed until after the sun had set and the stars were in view. One Christmas night he was found dead, completely covered with the bones he had cherished for many years. When the people found him he held a piece of paper in each hand; on one was written "Burn the bones at midnight," on the other, "Open my mouth." When the bones were burning, the snow was falling, the winds roaring and moaning. It took until the early morning hours to consume the bones and just as the cock crew in a neighboring barn-yard, a vapory moon was seen hovering over the embers. It swayed to and fro, like a boat on the waves, its movements grew more rapid until finally with a bound it shot upward and was lost to sight in the whirling fury of sleet.

When the old man's mouth was opened the next night, a soft phosphorescent light filled the place and the room was flooded with tiny stars even to suffocation. Opening the door, the people rushed madly out and found that the stars were pouring out of the chimney, falling about and burning them as they struck their faces. In perfect fright the men ran towards their homes, all the while the voice of the old man was calling them back. The doctor, cooler and braver than the rest, turned and entered the house once more. Shortly, a sepulchral voice slowly commanded the doctor to open his mouth, shut his eyes and count 100 quickly—the moment he had finished counting he leaped into the air and landed on the floor. Upon opening his eyes he saw his wife with a candle in front of him, laughing outrageously. The doctor jumped into bed, remarking that "that was the cussedest dream he had ever had, and that it must have been picked up by the moon centuries before, when sorcerers were plenty, and somehow had just become detached and fallen onto his head." Guess the doctor ate mince pie for supper.

WHO'D BELIEVE IT?

There was once a
rooster in Wales,
Who boasted he had
two tails,
When the wind one
day,
Blew his feathers
away,
Since which he's all
DOWN, on gales.

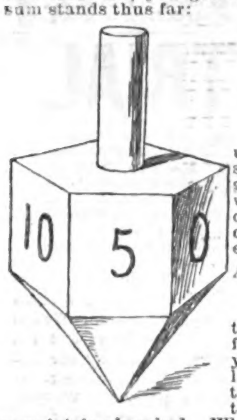


A SAILOR'S GAME

ON shipboard the sailor often passes many dull hours by spinning the "lucky top." It is an amusing toy and any boy can make it. Take a piece of square soft wood 1 1-2 inches long and 1 inch thick. Make it six cornered and pointed. Bore a hole in the flat top and fit a match into it, half an inch showing. Number the sides as follows: 5, 0, 10, X, 20, 2. The game is played in this manner.

You twirl with thumb and forefinger, and, for the sake of illustration, when the top falls you find it with 5 on top. Your chum twirls and gets 20; you twirl and get 2; chum gets 20; you get 5; chum gets 0; you get 10; chum gets X and loses all; you get 5; chum gets 20. The sum stands thus far:

You	5	Chum	20
"	2	"	20
"	5	"	0
"	10	"	X
"	5	"	20
	27		20



Keep on spinning until one gets, on even spins, 50, which is a game, and three games won, one after the other, entitles you to championship for the evening.

A SCENE IN EVERY CITY.

I SAW a ragged little girl standing in front of a toy shop yesterday. She was looking at the dolls, I thought, and she stood there for five minutes completely absorbed. What do you suppose I did, children? Well, I stepped up to the sweet-faced unfortunate and said, "Would you like one of those dolls, little girl?" She looked me keenly in the eye and replied, "What dolls?" "Those in the window," I said, pointing at a row of prim, gaudy dressed dolls. She looked, and half-smiling remarked, "I was not looking at those, but at the picture books. My little brother would like to see them—he loves them." My eyes filled for a second at sight of such an unselfish being. I must tell you, children, that when I gave her the picture books and a pretty blonde doll, she stood dumb for a moment, and then hanging her head, murmured, half choking with gratitude and joy, "Tim and I will always love you and wish you Merry Christmas." So intent was I in the matter, I did not notice that quite a group had gathered about and as the child was moving away several gentlemen stopped her and filled her hands with coins. Here, children, is 25 cents each. Carry it with you and stand near a toy shop and you will find lots of poor, very poor children looking into the window. Give them the quarter and take my word for it the joy you will have at the look which the child will give you will last you a whole year.



RUBY, give me some of the molasses candy you made last evening. What, have not got any! Well, you are like the tramp who was asked if he had a shirt to his back; he replied, "I haven't got any." and added, "if madame would be kind enough to sew one on to a button he had, he'd be obliged." This same tramp was afterwards arrested, and when the judge asked him if he ever washed himself, replied, "Yes, once a month, all except my feet." "Why not your feet?" said the judge. "'Cause my stockings are wished on," said the tramp with a grin.



Some one of you boys asked me the other day when it would be best to make a snow man. Come to think it over there are two times in the season best fitted for such fun, one is before the January thaw, say about 20th of the month, the other just before Washington's birthday, February 22nd. When I was a youth we used to make a ten-foot snow-ball at the first fall of moist snow and kept adding to it, and from this huge pile we built a man and a hut. Don't build huts, boys. It is unnatural to sit down in a tomb of snow—better make a fort or two and fight with loose snow-balls.



Several years ago a little girl in my neighborhood made a snow man; it was a wonder and the papers remarked it. In the summer I saw the same girl make mud and sand figures at the beach. To-day she is but twenty years old and yet she has been awarded a medal in the great Paris Salon for her sculptured work in marble, and she now has a studio in Boston, Mass. Her name is Miss Theo Ruggles, and a lovely woman she is.



BIG BILL.

THIS is Bill's own story, children. You can believe it or not. The drawings are his also.



"I grew up a fool, they said in my town. When I was thirty years old I went West. I weighed two hundred pounds. Got work in an elevator of grain. Darned if the men there didn't call me 'a fool.' I couldn't stand it no longer so I got my mad up one day and threw a big bully out the window. Then they liked me. But the officers came and locked me up. Just as they came to let me out for trial I knocked 'em down. They kept me twenty years in the cell and I got weak and they called me 'a fool' and I concluded I was. Don't be stubborn, boys, says I, 'Kinder give in. It's better for yer heart and stomach not to be a fool.' Them's my ideas," says Big Bill, "and here's my picture."





There, children, it's only eight o'clock. Come, Ruby, let us all go out and make some candy; when we go to bed we will think what we will do with our money for Christmas presents. Come along, my Comforts.

UNCLE CHARLES.

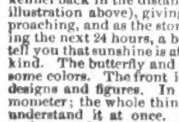
A STRONG BID.

B. F. JOHNSON & Co., Richmond, Va., are making a strong bid through our columns for earnest workers. Look up their advertisement and write them.

$20 A WEEK Ladies receive who write for us at home. Reply with addressed stamped envelope Woman's Co-Operative Toilet Co., South Bend, Ind.

YOUR LIFE FUTURE in love, business, and marriage. Written PREDICTION, 10c. Send age, sex, and lock of hair. ASTEROLOGER, BOX 578, Boston, Mass.

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18K Rolled Gold Diamond Ring Free. Best rolled gold plate, will wear for years. Stone, an Egyptian Diamond that puzzles experts to detect. Send this advertisement and 14 cents with string size of finger, and we will send this elegant $7.50 ring and new 64 page catalogue of jewelry, watches and novelties. DIXON WATCH CO., Chicago, Ill.

BOX OF JEWELRY FREE To introduce our lovely cards, novelties, &c. we will give to anyone sending us 5 cts. in stamps for postage, a handsome album of Sample Cards and one package of elegant Jewelry FREE. STEAM CARD WORKS, North Branford, Conn.

THE FAMILY RECORD.

A Gorgeously Beautiful Picture in magnificent coloring upon a back ground of pure gold; size, 16x22. In the center resting upon a beautiful easel and supported by a slab of purest marble is an open book in which to register the names and births of each member of the family, on the left a beautiful scroll and on the right another beautiful scroll on which to register the marriages and deaths. Surmounting all in most beautiful letters are the words, **"GOD BLESS OUR FAMILY."** Underneath are spaces for Fathers' and Mothers' pictures, and all around are similar spaces interspersed with most beautiful flowers and leaves buds and blossoms, roses and vines, etc., in varied colors and matchless beauty, all thrown into startling prominence by the beautiful and costly back ground of Solid Gold. **AGENTS, NOW IS YOUR TIME!** Our regular price is **50** cents but to any one who will cut this out and send with order we will sell at Agents' Prices. Sample by mail 35c; 6 for $1.25; 12 for $3.00; 25 for $4.00; 50 for $7.50; 100 for $13.50; 500 and a Handsome Watch and Chain, $65. **All charges prepaid. STANDARD SUPPLY HOUSE, Chicago, Ill.**

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We will send one of these wonderful machines FREE to all who send 50c. for yearly subscription to our magazine "COMFORT."

WATCH WHEN THE DOG COMES OUT.

THIS Weather Warning will faithfully forecast the weather for the ensuing 24 hours, so that you can get your own weather report without waiting for the newspapers to tell you what the weather report is to be. It is a cyclone warning. When the weather is going to be wet, a fine noble dog arises from his kennel back in the distance, and approaches the opening (see illustration above), giving a signal that there is a storm approaching, and as the storm subsides, or if it will be over during the next 24 hours, a butterfly in all its splendor appears to tell you that sunshine is at hand, to gladden the hearts of mankind. The butterfly and the dog are made of metal in handsome colors. The front is handsomely decorated with fancy designs and figures. In the centre stands an accurate thermometer; the whole thing being so simple that a child will understand it at once. When the devastating hurricane, cyclone and wind storms are approaching your home, this machine warns you long ahead, giving you time to prepare. It is a wonderful machine, and will save your life and many a dollar besides. It tells you whether you had better take your umbrella with you to-day. It tells a lady the weather, and she will know the most suitable dress to wear, etc. Enclose 50 cents to **Morse & Co., Box 9 Augusta, Me.**

BUY OLD COINS. Pay from 5 cents to $1,000 over face value for hundreds of kinds dated before 1871. Send stamp for particulars. Worth many dollars, perhaps fortune, to you. W. E. SKINNER, Reliable Coin Broker, 325 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.

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These Watches are FULLY WARRANTED, and would cost at retail $35 to $40, but to introduce our paper they will be given free WE WILL GIVE YOU ONE WITHOUT A CENT from your pocket. Remember you take no chance —YOU CANNOT LOSE— for we give a watch FREE TO EVERY PERSON complying with our offer If you want one, (lady's or gent's) write us without delay. With your letter send us 50c. postal note, for one year's subscription to our large 16-page Story Paper, "ONCE A MONTH," and you will receive our offer at once—we send Watch by registered mail, postpaid. Address ONCE A MONTH CO., Box 403, DETROIT, MICH.

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By the expenditure of thousands of Dollars in dies and tools for the manufacture of these goods we are enabled to offer them *free* as premiums to all new subscribers to **Home Cheer** a sixteen page standard monthly publication for the family circle, and published at 50 cents a year. Not only do we give these spoons as presents but we will engrave initials of subscribers on the spoons or the initials of any Lady or Gent you may desire to make a present to. In addition to all this we give you a chance to win one of the following prizes by sending a correct solution to the following:

What word in this Advertisement spells the same Backward as Forward.

A rare opportunity for every madam and maid, every father and son, to secure one of the following Prizes:

We will give **$500 Cash** to the **1st person** sending a **correct answer.** To the **2d, $100;** to the **3d, $50;** to the **4th,** an elegant **Diamond Ring.** To each of the next **5, a SOLID GOLD WATCH.** To the next **10, a Beautiful $25 Silk Dress.** To the next **25, a Nickel or Gold-Plated Watch.** To each of the next **50, a Genuine Diamond Ring.** To each of the next **100,** a valuable **Business or House Lot.**

This extraordinary offer is made for the purpose of securing 100,000 new subscribers, and in order to secure this premium you are required to send 50 cents for one year's subscription to **Home Cheer.** State the initials you desire engraved and enclose 10 cents extra or 60 cents in all to cover subscription, postage and packing expenses. Don't forget to send solution as to what word in this advertisement spells the same backward as forward as you are likely to get one of the above prizes and may win $500.

CLUBS.—If you send us five subscriptions and $3.00 we will send an extra subscription for yourself and six spoons. No notice taken of letters which do not enclose money for subscription.

Send money by postal note, registered letter or 64 cents in stamps. Address,

KENTON SMITH & CO.,
27 Beekman St., N. Y.

WONDERFUL WALKING DOLLS.



A MARVELOUS MECHANICAL CURIOSITY

has lately been invented in the doll line. There are no springs to be wound or other encumbering contrivances to get out of order. A simple scientific appliance. They walk naturaly and alone as if by some hidden force. Not only are children delighted, but even the happy boy and girlhood days are brought back to the older ones who shake their sides and simply roar to see the **Great Race of Races** as these dolls representing the various male and female characters of different nations are started across the room or table. The life-like manner in which they seem to run past each other in the mad haste to win, or marching single file, tripping each other up or executing other comical feats. The contrast of the different colored jackets or suits, while the Soldier, Chinaman, Negro or little Dollie herself speeds along, adds much to the novelty and enjoyment of the whole family of lookers on. We have secured the right to introduce this wonderful family to the millions all over the Union. To do so quickly and relying on future large sales for our profit, we will send one **FREE** all charges paid, to anyone sending 25 cents for a 6 months subscription or renewal to our beautiful magazine. Any kind of dolls always please the children but *Genuine Walking Dolls* are a joy forever. Address

PUBLISHERS OF COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

A year's subscription and 2 dolls 50 cents. Get a club of 4 yearly subscribers at 25 cents each and we send you 3 dolls all different FREE.

Happenings Here, There and Yonder.

A penny was recently found embedded in the heart of a peach.

A man out in Michigan committed suicide by swallowing his undershirt.

A Kentucky man has been struck four times by lightning and still lives.

Queen Victoria has selected Sir Theodore Martin for the poet laureateship.

A letter written by a Russian and addressed "Jagago" was sent to Chicago.

A ragged old man, arrested as a vagrant in New York City, produced bank books showing him worth $17,000.

In Chinese the letter "I" is pronounced 145 different ways, and each pronunciation has a different meaning.

The Chinese in America will contest the law compelling them to register their names and photographs.

A stock dealer in Indiana has just died from the effects of an iron awl an inch long, swallowed thirty years ago.

Some of the telephone patents are shortly to expire, and eventually this great monopoly will be broken up.

A tunnel is about to be driven into the centre of the rock of Gibralter in the hope of finding a supply of fresh water.

The French Minister of Finance proposes to partly make up a deficit in the year's Budget by taxing bicycles about $1.00 each.

During the prevalence of cholera each German soldier is allowed three-quarters of a cent per day for the purchase of liquor.

In Boston the average wages earned by hands in factories have been found to be half as much again as they were ten years ago.

It is said that the Chicago fire of 1871 destroyed $1,000,000 of property every five minutes, and 125 acres of buildings every hour.

The authorities of Portland, Oregon, have passed a law requiring all bicyclers to dismount when within 100 feet of anyone driving or riding a horse.

A five cent stamp will send a letter to the depths of central Africa. During its journey it is carried on the back of a mail runner for about 250 miles.

The Chicago Society for the Prevention of Smoke recently brought suits against factories, foundries, railroads and tug-boats, all of whom were fined.

Salton Lake, which so suddenly appeared a few months ago in the Colorado Desert, has entirely disappeared, and its bed is now covered with luxuriant verdure.

In the Sub-Treasury of New York City there is on deposit over $3,000,000 representing outstanding money orders which are overdue and may never be presented.

A fearful snowstorm in Colorado the second week in October resulted in great damage. Many lives were lost, and three hundred cattle froze to death between Colorado Springs and Limon.

A large herd of Siberian reindeer has been transported to Alaska by the U. S. Government. This wise step furnishes the natives with a new source of food, clothing and transportation.

An official in the Chicago post-office has noticed 197 different spellings of the name of that city on letters passing through his hands. Among them are Zizzazo, Hipaho, Sheehaco, Chachigo and Jaggago.

A new kind of glass for skylights, which will not fall and do damage when broken, is formed by inserting by a new process a kind of wire netting into the glass itself, when in a soft and plastic condition.

The boundary line between Illinois and Iowa is the Mississippi river. The Supreme Court is about to decide whether the middle of the river is the middle of the navigable channel or the middle of the river-bed.

A New York man made a bet with a man that he dared to commit suicide, and then to show his daring jumped into North River. He was fighting mad when pulled out and brought to shore by the captain of a tow-boat.

James Brooks, a 12 year old boy, has just been relieved of several inches of superfluous tongue, the enlargement of which was ascribed to a fish bone. The operation was performed at the Citizen's Hospital, Washington.

A Harvard college professor has found quartz, iron and black as well as white diamonds in a meteor which fell in Arizona. Small quantities of gold and silver have been found in solution in common sea water, by a foreign scientist.

Corbett, the pugilist, says that there have been more men badly hurt this year in foot-ball than have been injured by prize-fighting for the last ten years, and that foot-ball is patronized by society people simply because it is played by college students.

Two men made a wager that they would go by water from Rockaway Beach, near New York City, to Boston, Mass., in a dry goods box seven feet long, three feet wide and thirteen inches deep, within forty days. They made the trip in thirty-eight, and won $500.

Chicago University is to have the largest and most powerful telescope in the world. The object glass, which will be made in Cambridgeport, Mass., will be forty-five inches in diameter. The telescope is a gift of Charles T. Yerkes and will cost half a million of dollars.

The New York Central railroad has an engine which can run at the rate of 72 miles an hour. It is the largest passenger engine in the world. The tender is fitted with a water scoop, enabling it to take up water from troughs without stopping. Diameter of driving wheels, a little over 7 feet.

A gardener in Connecticut was frightfully stung by hornets, and dropped apparently dead. Physicians worked over him for two hours and finally gave him up. An hour later he revived and finally recovered consciousness. He had been stung in a nerve in the wrist which has a direct influence upon the heart.

The present custom of selling light beer at the army posts, under Government direction, keeps the men away from low whisky shops in the neighborhood of the garrison, where unlimited quantities of vile and fiery liquor could be indulged in. The army officers state that it is a vast improvement and an advance in the cause of temperance.

A Pennsylvania coal mine caught fire a month ago. At the bottom of the mine were forty-four mules. When it was again possible to enter the mine it was found that sixteen of the mules were alive. They had broken their halters and had gnawed their feed boxes and the timber props for food. They had also found a little loose hay and had eaten the stuffing in the collars.

A scientist declares that the influence of the climate will soon mould the native Americans into many characteristics resembling the Indians. We shall in time be tall, strong, straight haired, erect, with very little superfluous flesh. This will happen as soon as the population grows so large that the stream of immigration fails to affect it. Dark brown hair will prevail.

The first of January next the post-office department expect to place on sale the Columbian postage stamps. These will be of all the denominations now in use. They will be the same height, but twice the length of the present ones and will contain various scenes commemorating the Discovery of America. It is believed that these stamps will stimulate interest in the exposition, both at home and abroad.

A farmer in California, who had a traction engine, had 30,000 sacks of grain to take to the railroad for shipment to a town 17 miles away. Instead of hauling them to the railroad station and paying freight, he hitched 9 wagons to his engine, loaded up in the field and hauled it over the roads to town. Expenses, time of three men and the coal used. Round trip, five hours.

The great detective Byrnes, now at the head of the New York police, believes in an "ounce of prevention." His plan is to arrest and lock up noted sneak thieves, pickpockets and burglars, on the eve of any event, releasing them as soon as it is over. During the recent Columbus Celebration in New York City he made a big haul of professional thieves and many more were seen leaving town to escape several days' detention in jail.

The new post-office order says that whenever two-thirds of the householders along any free delivery route signify their desire to have the "double service" it will be established. This is a plan whereby the delivery men shall at the same time collect the mail along their routes, by means of boxes of a peculiar pattern. When there is any mail in the box, a white disk is exposed to view. The scheme is said to save both time and trouble.

The biggest elephant in the Chicago Zoological collection took a stroll into the streets the other day. An Italian fruit vender ran out and tried to stop her. He fell down and the elephant trotted right over him, carefully avoiding stepping on him. Most of the route was on board sidewalks which she smashed through at every step and seemed to enjoy immensely. She was recaptured when badly out of wind, and lay down to rest several times on the way back.

A sharper got up a novel dodge in New York City during the recent Columbus Celebration. Just at nightfall he entered the saloons and stores along a crowded street, carrying a big wrench, and announced that he was an inspector and was going to turn the gas off. The proprietors, terrified at the idea of losing their custom for one evening, invariably bribed him until he finally would agree to "go and see the boss" and see if he couldn't secure an extension of time for the storekeepers. He victimized a number, but finally was locked up.

The step which every one is directly interested in is the meeting "For Better Highways" held in Chicago last month. The following plan is recommended. The National League for Good Roads is to be organized primarily in the separate school districts of each State, and its membership shall be open to all citizens. There shall be no initiation fee or membership fee, but each member shall pay fifty cents per year toward a club subscription to a publication which will be the organ of the League and contain all topics of interest bearing upon the subject. The object of the organization is to awaken general interest in the condition of roads, determine the best methods of construction and repair, and secure the necessary legislation, state and national, to effect an improvement.

STICK A PIN IN HERE.

There is a decided neat, novel and handy little book filled with hundreds of different size pins, black and white, for Ladies Toilet or Gents pocket companion, just what every one needs, and as Morse & Co., Augusta, Maine, want every one to see their new Catalogue, they will send this valuable article free to all who send 4c. for mailing.

THE TOBACCO HABIT.

Although a great many persons enjoy life and fat up when victims of the tobacco habit, there are millions who would give all the worlds good they have in stock if they could but rid themselves of this cures of hawking, spitting and smoking. M. N. Tamer writes that he was for thirty years *a slave* to tobacco and it simply ruined his health. John Slinn a prominent business man in Fall River, Mass., said his Heart got into the state that physicians called Tobacco Heart and the continual use of tobacco for many years so upset his general health also that he could not eat, sleep or work. Yet both of these and thousands of others found immediate relief and a permanent cure by simply taking one tablet of Oxien after each meal. As it will not cost our readers anything to try this wonderful but harmless remedy we advise all to send at once to The Giant Oxie Co., Augusta, Maine, and get free samples which they now send to all troubled in this manner. We have positive proof of the great good it is doing.

THE STORY OF A CLEVER CHAP.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.



Copyrighted, 1892.

CHAP. I. "BILLY."

Billy Chapman was just sixteen, and his friends had secretly planned to give him a surprise party. Somehow Billy got wind of it and thought he'd surprise *them*. So he wrote to Morse & Co.—all on the quiet.



CHAP. II.

THE "STRANGER."

On the appointed evening his friends trooped into the parlor, but Billy was missing. A handsome young stranger came to greet them and said that one of Billy's relatives would be down directly.



CHAP. III. BILLY'S "UNCLE."

And presently a gentleman who announced himself as Billy's uncle appeared and told them that William had met with an accident that afternoon in "trying to shovel wind off the roof," and that the family doctor would explain all about it.



CHAP. IV. THE "DOCTOR."

Next, the doctor came and said it was a compound fracture of the physiognomy, but that Billy had recovered sufficiently to enable him to smile, and that he would shortly be down. In the meantime he would send in Mr. Beard, a friend of Billy's.



CHAP. V. THE "HONORABLE."

The Honorable Mr. Beard had no sooner entered than he thought the joke had gone far enough, and suddenly snatching a set of lifelike whiskers from his face, Billy himself made a polite bow and said, "Whose surprise party is this?"

The above shows what fun boys can have by investing a few cents in our wonderful false mustaches, beards, goatees, and whiskers. The pictures here shown are of one and the same person—Billy Chapman—and the marvellous changes were effected in a few seconds by means of these "gay deceivers." For Private Theatricals, Amateur Minstrel Shows, Charades, Tableaux, Parlor Entertainments, etc., they are simply immense. Nothing will so completely change one's appearance. A boy can be instantly transformed into a man so that even his sweetheart and parents fail to recognize him. They are made of the best material—genuine hair, nicely crimped—giving them a wavy and natural appearance. Instantly adjusted or removed from the face. Mustaches and goatees—gray, red, light, medium, or dark brown, and black, price 7 cents each, four for 25 cents, or 60 cents per dozen. Goatees, 5 cents each, four for 15 cents, or 40 per dozen. Beards and Whiskers—white, gray, red, light, medium, or dark brown, and black. Price, Full Beard, 60 cents; Whiskers with Mustache, 60 cents; four of either for $2.00. Any of above goods mailed, postpaid, on receipt of price. In ordering, send small lock of hair or state color desired. Address,

Morse & Co., Augusta, Maine.



Having recently purchased a large stock of watches upon special reduced terms consisting of solid gold, silver, and gold-filled cases, we shall offer a portion of the entire lot at prices never before heard of in the Watch trade. Among our stock are 2,879 American style watches, in gold-filled cases, which we shall sell singly or by the dozen to private parties or the trade at the unheard-of low price of $6.48 each. Each and every watch is guaranteed to keep perfect time for years. Think of it! A genuine American Style Movement watch, in gold-filled cases, and guaranteed for years, at $6.48. Those wanting a first-class, reliable timekeeper, at about one-third retail price, should order at once. Watch speculators can make money by buying by the dozen to sell over again. Gold Watches at $6.48. These watches must be sold and as an inducement for you to order quickly, we will send to each of the first one hundred, ordering from this advertisement, a Gold Watch worth $15.00, provided $6.48 is sent with the order. Cut this out and send to us with 25 cts. in postage stamps, as a guarantee that watch is ordered in good faith, which will partly cover us from loss of express charges, and we will send the watch to you C. O. D. subject to examination. If found perfectly satisfactory and exactly as represented, you can pay the balance of $6.23 and take the watch, otherwise you do not pay one cent. Can we make you a fairer offer? A handsome chain to those who send full amount with first order. Mention whether ladies' or gents' size is desired. W. S. SIMPSON, 37 College Place, New York.

OUR BIG ALBUM PREMIUM.



ELEGANT SILK EMBOSSED PLUSH ALBUMS, leaves highly decorated with Daises, Ferns, Golden Rod, etc., etc. Extension Silvered Clasp, Gilt Edge, Spring back and the most stylish, best gotten up LARGE PHOTO ALBUM ever imported into America, being a foot long, over nine inches wide and more than three inches thick, coming in finest colors, most tastily arranged leaves for cabinet and photo size pictures you ever saw. They will last for years, and you can now get one of these superb premiums FREE for a Club of 6 yearly subscribers to COMFORT, at 25c. each We do not sell them but if you have not time to obtain all the subscriptions, *you* can subscribe for some of your friends and sell the Album for several dollars as it is such as was sold for $8.00 at one time. Address,

PUBLISHERS OF COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

$3600 IN PRIZES.

Who Can Guess What This Word Is?

AIRY, SHUN, DICK.

The above words, when transposed and read correctly make the name of a very valuable book. What is it? For the first correct answers, we will give the following **CASH** voucher premiums:

1st, **$500,** 2d, **$300,** 3d, **$200,**
4th, **$100,** next 60 **$25** each.

In addition to the above, we shall give away choice **House or Business Lots,** valued from **$10** to **$50** each. With your answer send **20 cents,** in silver or stamps, for a box of **The Bellevue Liver Pellets.**

Remember you pay nothing for the prizes, as they are absolutely given away to introduce and advertise our never failing remedy for Constipation, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Sick Headache, Liver Troubles These Pills are purely vegetable, and are an invaluable assistant to the digestive organs. Long after the first cathartic effect, a mild laxative action continues, making their use particularly advantageous

They are recommended by leading physicians throughout the country, as a positive cure for Sick Headache. We shall promptly give all the prizes offered here. Write your name and address plainly, and address, BELLEVUE MEDICINE COMPANY,

Box 2152. **132 Church St., New York City.**

$1000 we will give if we cannot prove that the above Prizes are given as advertised.

REMNANTS
FOR CRAZY PATCHWORK



ART in needlework is on the advance. We know the ladies delight in odd pieces of silk and satin,—"CRAZY QUILT" making is VERY POPULAR. We are sure we have a bargain that all ladies will now delight in. Bright, handsome, odd-shaped, and pretty colored goods accumulate very fast at all NECKTIE FACTORIES; for years have been burdened and overrun with remnants of many RICH GOODS. We have thousands of pieces of silk and satin on hand which we are going to give you a big trade on. People at a distance have hard times getting the right assortment to put into sofa-pillows, quilts, etc., and we can help you out now. We are going to dispose of this immense lot RIGHT OFF. Our packages contain from 99 to 168 pieces of the best quality assorted goods, and we want to get a lot introduced into every home; then you can order as you like for your friends, and MAKE MONEY doing our work and helping yourself also Remember these pieces are carefully trimmed, and especially adapted to all sorts of fancy, art, and needle work. Many ladies sell tidies, fancy pillows, etc., at a great price made from these remnants. Order one sample lot now for only 25c. It would cost many dollars bought at a store. GRAND OFFER: If you order our great assorted lot AT ONCE, we will give you, absolutely FREE, five skeins of elegant embroidery silk, all different bright colors. This silk is worth nearly the price we ask for the remnants; but we know if you order ONE lot we will sell many in your locality, so make this liberal offer. Three lots for 65c.; five for $1.00. BEST WAY. We send ONE of the above complete assorted lots FREE to all who send 25 cents for 6 months subscription to "COMFORT," the best Home Monthly now published, or if you send for more than one lot as above, "COMFORT" goes for one year.

COMFORT PUB. CO., Box 120. Augusta, Maine.

BETTER YET. To all answering this ad. before 30 days we will also send 6 pieces of elegant PLUSH FREE. They come in Red, Blue, Green, Old Gold, etc.

THE DOLLAR CAMERA AND OUTFIT COMPLETE



A GENUINE PHOTO-TAKING MACHINE, NOT A TOY, But a Perfect Picture Producer, to be set up and used in any home.

In the line of our hundreds of low priced and reliable specialties, we now manufacture this **Complete Photographing Outfit,** which will be our leader during the coming season. This outfit consists of everything shown in cut and mentioned below; A strong and perfectly made CAMERA, which will take a picture 2 1-2 inches square, complete with adjustable holder for Plate and PERFECT LENS with cap; A package of the renowned "Harvard Dry Plates; 2 Japanned Tin Developing Trays; 1 Printing Frame; 1 package Blue Process Paper; 1 sheet Ruby Paper; 1 package Photo Mounts; Hyposulphite Soda; Developing Chemicals; complete and explicit instructions, enabling ANYONE to take ANY CLASS OF PICTURES with this Outfit. Now please remember that you are not buying a Camera ONLY but a complete and PERFECT OUTFIT, all ready for use without further expense to you. No such Outfit has sold heretofore for less than $5.00. Everything is carefully made and prepared and bound to work perfectly. A wonder to all who see it and its work. You are not restricted to any class of pictures. You can take Landscapes, Portraits, Buildings, in fact ANYTHING. The whole, securely packed in a wood case for shipping. Be your own Photographer. How many places of interest and friends that are dear, do you encounter every day whose image you would like to preserve? With this Outfit you can do it and almost without expense. It contains all the necessary materials. The instructions "do the rest." **PRICE ONLY $1.00** by express, by mail postpaid $1.15. Given for a club of 8 subscribers to COMFORT at 25 cents each.

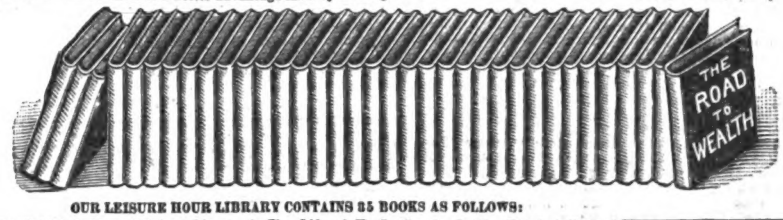
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Or if you would like to secure a larger and more expensive Outfit FREE, send for our complete Catalogue and Premium List. We have a grand Outfit for $2.50 and the Eclipse, No. 3, for only $10.00. We will send extra sample copies of this grand Number of COMFORT, together with subscription blanks so that it will be a easy matter for you to obtain subscribers and secure an outfit at once so you can build up a large business this season

A GOLD WATCH FREE!



We, the publishers, will give away absolutely free, thousands of Gold Watches, stem winding and setting, (in order to get new subscribers and agents) to thousands of persons as we state in our advertisement. These Watches come in ladies' or gentlemen's sizes, Hunting Cases or open face, in different styles of cases, each and every watch will be warranted and guaranteed by us and by one of the leading American Watch Companies, who have been doing business in this country for many years, also that every watch will run and keep correct time. This is one of the greatest offers ever made by any reliable publishing house. **HOW CAN WE** do all this is a question that thousands of people that read this offer will ask. **EASILY ENOUGH,** we are introducing our new library for Leisure Hours, which contains 35 volumes as described below. Every large and prosperous publisher has to spend thousands of dollars yearly to introduce his publications to the public. Some advertise one way and some another, but **ALL ADVERTISE.** We want to eclipse all others if we can and send our publications to the front. What loss we make this year by giving away premiums and paying newspapers will be made up ten fold in sales during the next few years. We propose to place at least one sample set of our library in every town in the United States within the next sixty days if money can do it, no matter what our loss may be at first We know every set sold will sell dozens more, as every one will be so pleased that they will want to act as our agent and sell for us. How can we advertise our business to a better advantage than by making the above liberal offer? Our new library is a wonder.



OUR LEISURE HOUR LIBRARY CONTAINS 35 BOOKS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Self Made Men of Modern Times. 2. The Life of U. S. Grant. 3. The Peoples' Natural History. 4. How to Make and Save Money on the Farm. 5. The Road to Wealth. 6. Wonders of the Sea. 7. Clouds and Sunshine, a novel by Chas. Read. 8. Between Two Sins, a novel by Dora Thorne. 9. A Wicked Girl, by Mary Cecil Hay. 10. A Tale of Sin. 11. From the Earth to the Moon, by Jules Verne. 12. The Baron's Will. 13. The Sorrow of a Secret. 14. Ruth Herrick. 15. Sir Noel's Heir. 16. The Lawyer's Secret. 17. The Evil Genius. 18. Gulliver's Travels. 19. Poems, by John G. Whittier. 20. Grimms Fairy Tales. 21. Round the Evening Lamp. 22. The Peoples' Natural History. 23. Low Life in New York. 24. My Sister Kate. 25. The Standard Letter Writer. 26. The Cities of the New World. 27. How to be Your Own Doctor. 28. The Common Sense Cook Book. 29. A Brave Coward. 30. Falsely Accused. 31. A Dangerous Woman. 32. Two Kisses 33. The Merchant's Crime. 34. For Love or Riches. 35. 150 Popular Songs, including "Ta-ra-ra Boom-der-ay," words and music. The above 35 books are by American and Europe's best and greatest authors and is the most wonderful library for home reading ever offered.



OUR GRAND 60 DAYS OFFER.

Upon receipt of **ONE DOLLAR,** bill, postage stamps, postal note, post office money order, bank draft, express money order or registered letter **FOR ONE COMPLETE SET OF 35 VOLUMES** of our Leisure Hour Library as described above, we will send you promptly by mail, postpaid, **AS A PRESENT,** absolutely free, the Handsome Premium, Engraved Hunting Case, that WE ILLUSTRATE HERE. Remember the books, 35 in number, will be sent you for only one **$1.00** and delivered free of all expense. We cannot send C. O. D., the amount is too small. Write at once. Any Bank, Newspaper or Commercial Agency in our city can tell you of our reliability. Consolidated Book Co., 7 & 9 W. B'way, N. Y



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CHURCH is above all others the one place into which no monkey-tricks should ever enter, yet last Sunday before a large congregation a most iniquitous piece of sleight-of-hand was perpetrated. When the contribution box went the rounds a Smart Aleck sitting well in the rear held up a shining gold piece conspicuously and the collector lost little time in shoving the plate at him.

Just as the villain lowered his hand to drop the gold in the plate, by a dexterous and imperceptible flip the coin flew up his sleeve. He immediately looked down to the floor and commenced poking around, and the near-sighted collection-taker, unwilling to lose so handsome a donation, quite naturally assisted in the search which the scamp instituted. All the people in the pew also got up and scuffled about with their feet, but to no result. The coin was not to be found.

The pious man who hustles for the heathen was just about to proceed on his regular rounds when he noticed that the cold cash contributor again thrust his hand into his pocket and produced another coin, at the same time motioning for him to return, which he promptly did, when the scandalous deception was repeated.

By this time the attention of the entire congregation was on this little pew performance, and as church broke up it was whispered about that somebody had recognized the stranger as the fire-eater of a Boston Dime Museum. The fact that the citizens of Cohasset are a peaceful and God-fearing community—and because they couldn't find the man—prevented the enaction of a dark, deep, crimson-tised tragedy.



CORRESPONDENT who signs herself Clarissa wants us to tell her what she ought to get for poetry like the following:

TO LEANDER.

Upon this troubled sphere there creeps
An angel-girl whose heartlet leaps
At mention of thy name.

But from her eyes, those lovely keeps
Of tears, that flow whene'er she weeps,
A liquid sorrow daily peeps
And nightly just the same.

The absence of your presence steeps
Her soul in woe. She seldom sleeps
But great big tears in chunks and heaps
She weeps—sweet Birdie weeps.

The reward for such productions, Clarissa, differs according to sex, age and previous conduct of the perpetrator. And, to be perfectly frank with you, we should say that, if you were a man, you ought to get six months for the above, provided it was your first offense. As a rule, where such poems are written on the best quality of paper, COMFORT pays two cents a pound, delivered free on board in Augusta—not for publication but as an evidence of good faith and as a re promoter.



THERE'S noaccounting for tastes. Here we have millions of people eating political crow just now, most of whom would no doubt shrink from a sniff of roast 'Possum. Perhaps it's just as well that this is so, for there wouldn't be 'Possums enough to go 'round if everybody hankered after this dainty dish, particularly since the new way of gathering the playful midnight prowler was discovered by a sable sonny of the sunny south.

This enterprising pickaninny stole forth from the parental cabin, down in Virginia, one frosty night last December in search of a Christmas dinner. He had on an ancient overcoat, nine sizes too numerous for him, into the pockets of which his arms were thrust to the elbows. His battered cap was strapped tightly to his wooly head with a big knit tippet, which after passing round his neck several times descended to his waist, to which it secured the flapping ulcerated overcoat.

Was he heading for neighboring henroosts?

History tells us that he was not, but that he proceeded to the Potomac persimmon patch, where he spied a big fat 'Possum, who immediately scrambled up a tree. Young Africa was about to shin up and gather him in, when he discovered another 'Possum a little further on, also making up a tree. At this instant the discovery which has revolutionized 'Possum picking from persimmon trees flashed across the pickaninny. He knew that as long as he stood under the tree the 'Possum wouldn't come down, but he couldn't stand under two trees and go for help, all at the same time. So he pulled off the overcoat, fastened it by the arms around one tree, and tied his jacket round the other, with the aid of the long comforter; when suddenly up bounced two more 'Possuns into another tree. Little Zeke had only two more garments to choose from, but though the night was cold, his trousers were soon artistically tied by the legs around the third tree. And a moment later his fluttering shirt-tails scaled the snake-fence, and like a flash light swooped down the road towards the cabin.

When old Uncle Pete and his wife thrust out their heads to see what the tremendous racket was about, visions of White Caps, Klu-Klux Klans and Regulators flashed through their heads as they beheld their chattering offspring hopping frantically about on the doorstep, but a few minutes later, old Black Joe himself sallied forth, accompanied by little Zeke, in more assorted raiment than before; and presently they returned, radiant with delight, and loaded with



IN A shallow little store on Battery street there is more stored-up music than anywhere else in Boston. It is Senor Grosse's music emporium and the headquarters for all hand-organ business of New England.

At night the place is packed with all sorts of instruments of torture, from the old-fashioned knapsack organs with one wooden leg and few stops to the great mechanical engine that occupies a third of the store and imitates all the instruments of that little German band.

There are old weather-beaten hand-organs that have seen the rise and fall of many generations of grinders; fancy music boxes with giddy marionettes that dance in time to the spirited tunes; peep holes with musical attachments and modern concert organs that are wound up to play for half an hour at a time in beer gymnasiums, museums and other pious resorts.

But most of all there are piano organs set upon stout carts to be hauled through the streets of the city. The organ-grinders like the city with a small c, but the City with a big C, represented by the blue-coated policemen, is their great bugaboo. The City will not allow them to play without a license costing a dollar, and not even for a dollar may they collect the nickles with a dressed-up monkey.

The City says that monkeys are ugly and bite people, but unfortunately for the City there are more streets than policemen and monkeys are hard to catch.

Peter Rosetti, unless the City has found him out, lives in the third story of a North End tenement with his daughter Angela and little Jocko. Angela's two chief accomplishments are singing and the making of cheese. As to Jocko's accomplishments—well, we shall see!

Last Christmas eve a sudden, ponderous knocking at the door frightened the old Italian, who lived in constant fear that the City would appear and tear his little coin-collector from him.

"Hunta da hole," he quickly hissed to the monkey.

The nimble ape leaped for a stove-pipe hole in the wall, but missed his hold, and just as a burly policeman came lumbering in, the unfortunate little ape fell headlong into a tub of whey, from whence he clambered, drenched and scolding, to the top of a bed-post. He looked so comical and woe-begone, in his dripping little red and blue uniform, that the "majesty of the law" grinned in spite of himself.

Old Peter quickly took refuge in true Italian diplomacy, and seeing this was a favorable opportunity, instantly commanded the monkey to "singa a song for the gentlemon," whereupon Jocko thrust one hand into his bosom, waved the other tragically in the air, and in a rich and well-oiled tenor gaily trilled forth "I'm Mary Kelly's Beau," to the total paralysis of the "cop."

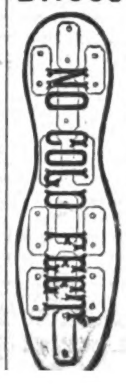
Noting the undoubted impression produced, the crafty Italian at once brought forth a bottle of fine Chianti wine, unchained some rare Gorgonzola cheese, and banquetted the policeman royally. Under this considerate treatment the blue-coat soon revived sufficiently to seek the explanation of this most marvelous musical monkey, from the proud proprietor.

He learned that little Jocko had been put in a small room the walls of which were lined with looking-glasses. Meanwhile, Angela was stationed in the hall and began singing. As her sweet, mellow spaghetti-soprano leaked through the partition, Jocko looked around in amazement, and seeing nothing but monkeys on all sides of him, naturally concluded that they were furnishing the picnic. He promptly determined that no bean-fed Boston monkeys should outshine in vocal "eulchaw" a descendant of the Howler family from Madagascar. Not much. So he just turned to and in less than a week could warble "My Grandfather's trousers bulge out at the knee," "Sweet Spirit hear me Swear," and other patriotic airs in the highest style of the flowery Italian art. His repertoire just walked all round old Rosetti's hand-organ tunes, and it's only a question of time when he goes on the stage in heavy opera.

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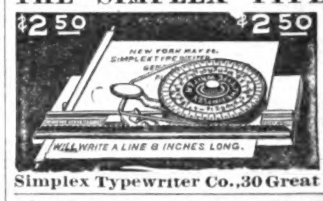
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